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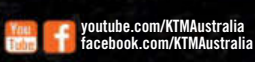
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“Mike left, and I sat in the sun. Tent up, book out, and I took stock of where I was and what it would be like to be here for a day, maybe a night. I had everything I needed to keep me fed and hydrated, and while it wouldn’t be pleasant I was going to be okay.”

This 6951km, 12-day trip to Australia’s centre and back sure threw up its share of challenges. Read about it on page 74.

NEWS FOR ROAD RIDERS

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MICK MATHESON

DESIRE'S GOT A HOLD ...

It might be the bike you should have, but is it the bike you would have?

Writing my tests of the BMW F800R and Triumph Tiger XRx this issue, I was struck by the obvious yet often overlooked lessons they both brought. I recently tested the R1200R and Tiger XCx, and if I'd gone out to buy a BMW roadster or Triumph Tiger yesterday, they're the ones I'd have. That's my personal preferences, or prejudices, at work. But I can now think of many reasons why I'd buy an F800R over an R1200R or a Tiger XRx over a Tiger XCx. They're very practical and sensible reasons, too, but they don't exclude the fun and satisfaction. I'm sure you'll get the gist of them when you read the tests.

However, when I put aside my best efforts at journalistic objectiveness and return to my own thoughts on what I'd buy, I still come back to the R1200R and 800 XCx. It's just me — I know what I want and I won't listen to sense. No, I don't ride bush track and sand dunes much, but I want a bike that encourages me to do it. No, I don't need the power and cost of the 1200cc boxer, but I'll spend the extra money to get that kind of grunt. I have never actually bought a bike because it was the sensible choice. There was always a level of desire and excitement underscoring the choice. The only thing that ever stopped desire running rampant was lack of unlimited funds. You're probably the same. And I do hope that *ARR*'s tests are never responsible for leading you out of temptation and onto something too sensible for your own good.



■ Two rather different kinds of riding in South Africa!

RIDE SOUTH AFRICA WITH ME

Come and ride South Africa's best roads with me in March 2016 when *Australian Road Rider* joins South African Motorcycle Adventures for an unforgettable experience. I've already signed up to do SAMA's Best SA Roadtrip Ever tour and I'd love you to join the fun of this sensational 17-day ride from March 11 to 28, 2016. To add to the temptation, I've convinced SAMA to throw in a free overnight elephant experience exclusively for you and other *ARR* readers, and I'll ensure you get some professional-quality photos to add to the memories you catch on your own camera.

The Best Roadtrip tour takes in the winding coast roads of South Africa as well as scenic routes away from the water, and includes

a safari in the famous Kruger National Park. It's a 4000km journey beginning in Pretoria and looping to beautiful Cape Town. I can vouch for the quality and excitement of the roads down Cape Town way!

The accommodation is in luxurious three- and four-star hotels and lodges and the food promises to be excellent. All riding will be on good tarmac roads but we'll be able to opt for some exciting off-road routes on rest days.

And then the bonus elephant package for *ARR* readers adds even more! We'll visit an elephant sanctuary where you can interact with these magnificent animals, literally going trunk-in-hand with them and taking a ride. You'll learn a lot about them and

spend a night in the Elephant Guesthouse near their stables. You'll visit a monkey sanctuary, go for a cable-car ride over Hartbeespoort Dam, and we'll take care of all the transfers.

SAMA is a family-run business that's established its reputation over 12 years of leading groups around South Africa. They'll provide immaculately prepared BMW F700GS, F800GS and R1200GS LC bikes for you to choose from.

Depending upon what you want to ride and the exchange rate when you book, this trip of a lifetime will cost about \$8000-\$9000 plus airfares and other extras. See the SAMA website (www.samatours.co.za) for full details. When you book, let them know you're with *ARR* to ensure you get the exclusive Elephant Package. **ARR**

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But some of us are looking at the Stars"
Oscar Wilde



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NEWS FOR ROADRIDERS

STATE OF THE MARKET

New models sustain motorcycle sales

New models such as the Harley-Davidson Street 500, Ducati Scrambler and Indian Scout were helping maintain road motorcycle sales numbers in Australia in the first half of 2015. Road bike sales were near flat at

a 0.08 per cent increase to 21,668, according to the official figures released by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI).

The whole motorcycle market was slightly down by 1.3 per cent to 51,578, but ATVs were up a whopping

TOP 10 SELLING MOTORCYCLES, JAN-JUNE 2015

	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	% Chg
Honda CT110X	1123	1486	-24.4%
Kawasaki Ninja 300	1096	1442	-24.0%
Harley-Davidson Softail Breakout	765	596	28.4%
Harley-Davidson Street 500	745	0	-
Yamaha MT-07L	701	0	-
Honda CRF50F	676	1038	-34.9%
Honda CRF230F	644	437	47.4%
Honda CBR300R	624	0	-
Yamaha TT-R50	612	650	-5.8%
Honda CBR500R	564	1049	-46.2%

TOP 10 ROAD BIKE SALES, BY MANUFACTURER

Manufacturer	YTD 2015	YTD 2014	% Chg
Harley	4566	3985	14.6%
Honda	3980	4364	-8.8%
Yamaha	3066	2508	22.2%
Kawasaki	2874	2914	-1.4%
BMW	1648	1411	16.8%
Triumph	1497	1343	11.5%
Suzuki	1292	1537	15.9%
Ducati	981	914	7.3%
KTM	649	872	-25.6%
Indian	292	174	67.8%



11.3 per cent to 11,049, while scooters continued to slide, down a massive 25.9 per cent, and off-road motorcycle sales were down 5.8 per cent.

Harley-Davidson had a scorcher of a first half with a 14.6 per cent increase to 4566, moving past Honda to become the top-selling road bike company in Australia as cruiser sales continue to run rampant.

Harley now accounts for more than one in every five road bikes sold. The Softail Breakout continues to sell well and is now the third-best-selling bike in Australia with 765 sales, up 28.4 per cent. The company's new learner-approved Street 500 was fourth with 745 sales, despite not being available until February.

Meanwhile, its new cruiser competitor, Indian Motorcycle, was up a massive 67.8 per cent to 292, largely on sales of the new 1133cc Indian Scout. That brought it into the top 10 road bike companies for the first time.

Ducati was also a winner, up 7.3 per cent to 981, after the introduction of new models, especially the Scrambler. The bike has helped Ducati set a new half-year record of 32,600 sales worldwide, up 22 per cent. More than 9000 Scramblers have been sold, which is almost twice as many as the next most popular Ducati model, the Multistrada.

Other road bike companies that scored well were Yamaha, up 22.2 per cent to 3066, thanks largely to its MT range, BMW up 16.8 per cent to 1648, and Triumph up 11.5 per cent to 1497.



PRINT YOUR OWN MOTORCYCLE

“TE Connectivity claims it took 1000 hours to design and then print the bike, which cost about \$US25,000 (\$32,800) to build”

An American company has printed out a working motorcycle using a 3D printer. The first 3D-printed working motorcycle was produced by TE Connectivity and unveiled at the Rapid 2015 3D printing conference in Long Beach, California.

The Harley Softail-styled bike only needed tyres, brakes, some wiring, battery, belt drive, mirrors, side stand, some bolts and an electric motor before it was ready to roll. All the rest, including the frame, tank and wheels, are printed in plastic.

And it may not be much longer before

■ At \$US25,000 (\$32,800) you'd want some say in the colour choice ...



manufacturers are doing the same, or at least printing out components using lightweight plastic composite materials. Back in January, a New York artist built a plastic motorcycle with a 3D printer and a South African designer built a working lawnmower largely on a 3D printer.

However, this is the first time a working motorcycle has been printed on a 3D printer. It can support 181kg, which would be good for a rider and passenger. While the engine only outputs 1hp (0.75kW) and the bike has a top speed of just 24km/h, it is the start of a new era in motorcycle production.

TE Connectivity claims it took 1000 hours to design and then print the bike, which cost about \$US25,000 (\$32,800) to build.

Prices of 3D printing are quickly reducing. Home 3D printers now cost less than US\$200 (\$260), but they just make items out of plastic. This is great for custom builders and restorers who may want to reproduce a plastic item that is difficult to find.



Soon they could also be able to afford a metal 3D printer so they can even make engine parts too. Michigan Technical University researchers have built a 3D metal printer that will cost less than \$1500. Also, TE Connectivity printed some parts in bronze via Direct Metal Laser Sintering (DMLS) that uses a laser to melt shapes such as the headlight housing out of layers of metal powder.

The main load-bearing parts were built with Fused Deposition Modelling (FDM) technology that injects layers of ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene) plastic enriched with the heat-resistant resin Ultem 9085.

TE Connectivity used this process to print several parts with complex dynamic properties, such as the frame. The wheel bearings were printed in a single piece with the hub and drive sprocket, and tests reveal they hold up to the load and heat stress.

CAUSE OF THE CRASH

Road design a major cause of crashes according to Austroads report

The Austroads Road Design Task Force report analyses a wide range of rural road design theories, with a special section just for motorcycles.

Some of the identified problems with rural roads that cause crashes include a lack of sealed shoulders, steep downhill grades combined with curves, roadsides with close hazards such as trees, and high-volume intersections.

The report proposes many changes to Austroads' road design guidelines aimed at reducing the casualty crash risk on rural roads. This is a welcome departure for Austroads, the leading transport and traffic authority in Australia and New Zealand. They have previously shown scant regard for motorcycles in other reports. The report also identifies elements specific to motorcyclists and sources a 2010 study of more than 30,000 curves.

The study identified four road design elements that had a significant impact on motorcycle crashes. They were length of the curve, curve radius, distance from the end of the curve, and shoulder width. It says that as the curve length increases, motorcyclists have an increasing risk. A one per cent change in curve length increased the crash frequency by 0.39 per cent. Of course, longer curve lengths are usually on roads with higher designated speeds.

"This may indicate that the motorcycle



↑ Trees and unsealed shoulders are two common factors in motorcycle crashes in Australia

riders may not be able to handle their motorcycle over these higher speeds," the report says. "It may be that when the motorcyclist travels around the curve, they tend to accelerate to a 'high-speed instability' compared to the straight sections."

They also identified that rider crash frequency increased significantly the tighter the curve radius. For every 30m beyond the curve, the motorcyclist crash rates decrease by 43 per cent, up to a distance of 100m.

The report also identifies that the shoulder width has an influence on crash rates. Shoulder

widths less than 1.80m were found to have an increase in motorcyclist crash rates of 52 per cent over wider shoulders.

In their summary of recommendations, they suggest widening shoulders, increasing the inside width of a road to decrease the curve, and visible road markings to show an approaching corner in an effort to slow the rider's speed.

The latter solution is basically a visual trick with road markings that makes the road look narrower. It's called perceptual countermeasure and was developed by Melbourne's Monash University in 1999.

BRAVE RIDERS ONLY

"Camping along the way allowed participants to travel to remote destinations and explore tracks less travelled"

Video of the 2015 BMW GS Safari Enduro has been released, showing some incredible skills in very tough conditions, proving the event is only for the brave and talented.

BMW Safaris started 21 years ago and after a few years, it was split into a TS Safari for road bikes and GS safari for off-road bikes. However, with the advent of more GS models and calls by riders for tougher events, the GS Safari was split a few years ago into the standard Safari and the Enduro for highly skilled riders.

The first Enduro event was held in the cold, wet Victorian high country in 2013 and the 2014 event was a contrast across the hot, dry north. The third GS Safari Enduro in May featured the toughest conditions yet. It started in Bourke,

NSW, with 110 riders and headed down the Darling River from its headwaters to the mouth of the Murray in South Australia.

Riders were faced with challenging terrain, soft sand, mud, bulldust and an abundance of wildlife. The group travelled north towards the famous border track, following the Murray River to Victor Harbor in South Australia.

The ride was a scenic run criss-crossing the Murray all the way to the mouth, where participants were able to smell the salt air and see the Murray flowing into the ocean after six days of dusty outback riding. Camping along the way allowed participants to travel to remote destinations and explore tracks less travelled.

Highlights included stopping at beautiful riverside stations, sitting around the fire



↑ The GS Safari takes commitment over five challenging days of riding. But it's worth it!

and hearing stories of the amazing history of the remote areas. Riders were pushed to their limits, with days four and five being the most challenging tracks yet offered at a BMW GS Safari Enduro.

This year's Safari included four father-and-son teams, riders from across the globe and an age range from 17 to 73 years. The next BMW GS Safari is in November.

To receive information on BMW Safari and other BMW Motorrad events, follow BMW Safari on facebook.com/bmwsafari or call 1800 813 299.



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FAST, FURIOUS FELONS

Bikes, speed and crime linked

Repeat high-speed offenders are more likely to hold a motorcycle licence and have a criminal history, according to a Queensland University of Technology study. It also suggests more severe penalties for these offenders, including vehicle impoundment, speed-limiting devices and drink-driving-style sanctions.

The Accident Analysis and Prevention study was compiled by researchers at the QUT Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety.

Road safety researcher and co-author Dr Judy Fleiter says it is the first study of its kind to investigate the criminal history, personal characteristics, traffic offences and crash history of high-range speeding offenders. The study profiles offenders from 84,456 speeding offences in Queensland classified into three groups: once-only low-range offenders; repeat

high-range offenders; and other offenders.

It found 55.2 per cent of repeat high-range speeding offenders had a criminal history. The study also found repeat speeders were more likely:

- To be male, younger, hold a provisional and a motorcycle licence
- To have committed a range of previous traffic offences
- To have a significantly greater likelihood of crash involvement
- To have been involved in multiple-vehicle crashes and
- To have committed drug offences.

Offenders who held a motorcycle licence were 1.6 times more likely to be repeat high-range offenders compared with those offenders with just a car licence.

Judy points out that Department of Transport and Main Roads data did not show which type of vehicle an offender who held a motorcycle licence was driving or riding at the time of the infringement.

Despite her caveat, the findings are nothing new. The perceived link between youth, motorcycles, speed and crime has long been written in folklore and is exemplified in movies from *The Wild One* to *Mad Max*.

The study also says the findings are consistent with annual community attitude surveys. It shows people with full motorcycle licences are less likely than other licence class holders (except heavy vehicle) to have conservative attitudes to speeding

and its enforcement.

In conclusion, the study suggests stiffer speeding fines for high-range offences. This is despite acknowledging that "there is limited evidence to indicate that increasing the severity of sanctions and penalties, in isolation, can deter offending".

It even points out that serious offenders are more likely to view the risks associated with detection and punishment as low. They also see the rewards of offending as greater than the possible costs. Therefore, it also suggests a range of "innovative countermeasures" such as behavioural modification programs, vehicle impoundment, and/or the compulsory installation of Intelligent Speed Adaptation devices in the vehicles of high-range and repeat speeding offenders.

The report says an education campaign is important to ensure motorists are aware that penalties have increased and detection and apprehension "is relatively certain. In the context of the current study, the findings suggest that graduated penalty schemes, whereby more severe sanctions are administered for high-range and repeat speeding offences (eg, similar to drink driving sanctions in Australia and some other countries), may be necessary to deter problematic traffic offenders. In addition, other lessons may also be learnt from drink driving sanctions (such as the use of alcohol ignition interlocks and vehicle impoundment for repeat offenders)."



■ Toecutter and his mates were the '80s motorcycle bad boys

NATIONAL RENTALS

Three Australian companies have merged to form a nationwide motorcycle rental and tour company called BikeRoundOz.

A company itself for 14 years, it has now joined forces with the Australian division of worldwide tour operator Compass Expeditions and Sydney rental and tour company Bikescape.

The merger gives riders a single source for pre-ride advice, rental bikes, tours and support right across the nation. Managing director Selena Thurbon says the new organisation has a central booking office with collection and drop-off depots in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, Cairns and Adelaide.



"The key things that ensure fellow riders enjoy their time in Australia are high-quality advice from real people that have ridden the routes many times, expertly prepared bikes, attention to detail, and fast support no matter where you are in the country," she says. "Australia is vast and without good knowledgeable advice you can miss all the good stuff. Our daily focus is to

ensure clients make the most of their time here, whether it's a day trip from the city or a cross-continent, gravel-road epic."

The national fleet has many BMW and Harley-Davidson motorcycles, but Japanese bikes and scooters are also on the list.

Check out the fleet and prices at bikeroundoz.com.

"The new organisation has a central booking office with collection and drop-off depots in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, Cairns and Adelaide."

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FOR THE RIDE



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FIRST AID FOR YOU

Motorcycle first aid course around Australia

Rider safety trainers Roger and Tracy Hughes are taking their motorcyclist first-aid course on the road to reach even more people over the next two years. The First Aid for Motorcyclists half-day course has trained 350 riders in Sydney over the past year and the aim is to include thousands more.

Principal trainer Tracy says they are now getting a lot of demand in other cities and regional centres for the course, so they are taking

it on the road to major regional centres and capital cities around Australia. Their goal is to put 3000 riders through the half-day course and raise community awareness around motorcycle accident scene and injury management, and raise money for the Royal Rehab, Brain and Spinal Injury Units in Ryde. "We want to help as many riders as we can, plus have a great adventure at the same time," Tracy says.

The course, developed specifically for riders, teaches the vital skills and knowledge needed to provide immediate roadside first aid and effectively manage the accident scene until emergency services arrive. Tracy says it is not a regular first-aid course, but modified for riders with practical and relevant content. Last year ARR ran the story of how Tracy became interested in first-aid training after a friend crashed on a ride. Seeing first-hand how critical it is to have good first aid skills and act decisively at an accident scene inspired Tracy to become a senior first-aid

instructor for St John Ambulance. From there, she developed a first-aid course specific to riders.

By the end of the hands-on training session, riders will have learnt when and how to perform emergency helmet removal, give effective CPR, move a casualty in danger, treat a rider with serious road trauma injuries and safely manage the accident scene.

Cost is \$78, but it is endorsed by the Ulysses Club so members get a 50 per cent discount. For bookings visit firstaidformotorcyclists.com.au.



ALL IN

"While Harley Days will be a uniquely Harley event, in the spirit of large-scale US rallies like Daytona Bike Week and Sturgis, we'll welcome riders of other brands because we want all riders to share in the Harley-Davidson experience"

Harley-Davidson Australia has decided to open up future national rallies to non-HOG members, riders of all types of motorcycles and rebrand the event as Harley Days. The first inclusive Harley Days event will be held from October 28-30, 2016, in Wollongong, 85km south of Sydney. The event will be open to all riders, no matter what type of bike they ride, confirms Harley-Davidson PR manager David Turney.

"While Harley Days will be a uniquely Harley event, in the spirit of large-scale US rallies like Daytona Bike Week and Sturgis, we'll welcome riders of other brands because we want all riders to share in the Harley-Davidson experience," he says. "We're taking what we learned from the recent Iron Run in NZ, which we opened up, to plan for the first Australian open event."

Harley has faced a fortuitous dilemma in recent years with the influx of new young riders since the addition of urban-chic bikes such as the Iron 883, 72 and the new learner-approved Street 500. These non-traditional Harley riders gain a free year's HOG membership when they buy a new Harley and they have been changing the face of HOG.

Harley execs realise these riders may not want to stay in HOG, so the company has

been looking at how they can keep them coming to rallies without being members. They also want to open their events to riders of other marques to showcase their brand to more potential customers.

After the success of similar open Harley rallies overseas, the inaugural Iron Run in New Zealand in March this year and national HOG rallies with some open events included, officials were keen to push for open Australian HOG rallies.

This caused a bit of a stir among some HOG members who wanted to keep the events closed and exclusive, while others saw the advantages for Harley in gaining more followers and being able to attract bigger crowds, which could mean more sponsorship dollars and better entertainment.

Although no details of the Harley Days event have been released yet, it is expected to be similar to previous HOG rallies. Harley executives have also suggested there may be HOG-only sections of the event, such as the VIP welcome party at the Iron Run and the front section of the Thunder Run, to make HOG members feel a "little special".

If the experience of the Iron Run is anything to go by, 90 per cent of the bikes that show up will be Harleys, anyway. HD customer experience manager Gaz Luxmoore says Harley Days will be a "massive



■ Harley might have made Sturgis their own, but now it's for everyone

celebration of all things Harley".

Wollongong has been chosen because it is close to Sydney and riders of the new Street 500 and other custom urban cruisers won't be daunted by the big distances usually required to travel to HOG rallies. For Sydney riders, it's a pleasant 85km ride through the Royal National Park and past pristine beach towns. For interstate riders, it will be a bit more of an adventure.

While the annual national HOG rally is now a free-for-all, there is no talk of any change to the members-only state HOG rallies.



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MOTORCYCLE FUTURE UP IN THE AIR

The future has no wheels

Is the future of motorcycles up in the air rather than on two wheels? It seems so after two companies last year produced hover-bikes and one now has the mighty financial backing of the US Department of Defence.

First there was the two-seater Aero-X hover bike and now UK company Malloy Aeronautics is building a solo-seater hover-bike. Californian company Aerofex plans to have its Aero-X hover-bike available for sale in 2017, costing about \$US85,000 (\$113,000). They are now taking deposits.

The two-seater Aero-X is powered by a naturally aspirated three-rotor rotary engine. It will hover up to 3m above the ground and reach speeds of about 70km/h. The hover-bike takes off vertically with no need for a run-up or landing strip.

Aerofex has been issued an international

patent for its ducted-fan technology. They are using crowd-funding to develop and manufacture the hover-bike, while Malloy Aeronautics has the extra boost of the US military.

They plan to develop the vehicle as a new class of Tactical Reconnaissance Vehicle or TRV. Like the Hummer, which started as a military vehicle, this could eventually become a production vehicle for the masses.

Malloy claims its hover-bike will be fast and capable of out-maneuvring a helicopter. It looks like flying hoola hoops and there is no word on what powers the machine. But it basically is an oversized drone which the company specialises in making.

The makers say it takes off like a helicopter, will fly to an altitude of more than 3000m and reach speeds of 100 knots (185km/h). It is

also being designed to carry a much heavier payload than ordinary drones. It is expected to have motorcycle-style controls and be ridden like a motorcycle.

■ We don't think the tyre manufacturers are too worried about this ...



FAST FORWARD

"Just how fast is 400mph (643.738km/h), anyway? Well, it means travelling at 586ft or 178m every second."

British engineer hopes to break the 640km/h barrier, set a new world record and possibly go as high as 720km/h in his two-wheeled, helicopter-powered streamliner.

Richard Brown, 50, of Oxfordshire will head to the Bonneville salt flats in Utah this

month. There he will attempt to break the official FIM world two-wheeled land speed record, which now stands at 376.373mph (605.714km/h). However, they claim their Jet Reaction is designed to travel at speeds up to 720km/h, according to a Computational Fluid Dynamics study by Huddersfield University.

The 6.1m-long Jet Reaction streamliner weighs 560kg and is driven by a helicopter gas turbine engine with an afterburner.

It was tested on the Pendine sands of Wales, but because of the condition of the surface, uneven and soft sand reducing traction, no major speeds were attempted, says spokesman Tom Burns. "While challenging, it was an important alternative to the usual hard-surface testing and yet more challenging than the salt flats surface of Bonneville. It was also an opportunity for the seven-strong support team to put into practice procedures for Bonneville. This included radio test, refuelling, battery re-charge, tyre check, vehicle body check, assisting Richard Brown in and out of the vehicle."

Just how fast is 400mph (643.738km/h) anyway? Well, it means travelling at 587ft or 179m every second. That's the length of nearly two football fields in the blink of an eye.

Richard has built and piloted two similar vehicles in the mid 1990s, including the rocket-powered Mach 3 Challenger that set a top speed of 332.887mph (535.730km/h). It was the fastest two-wheel vehicle at the time, but because he was unable to complete a return run due to track conditions, he was not entitled to claim the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme record.

■ Scary fast!



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TOUGHER EDUCATION

Learning more the key to saving lives on Qld roads

New motorcycle riders may have to do more training off public roads, face a longer learner licence period and undergo tougher skills tests to move to unrestricted licences. These measures are part of a Queensland government scheme to improve motorcycle safety.

The announcement was accompanied by an \$8 million pledge to upgrade known motorcycle

black spots, starting with more than \$2.5 million to upgrade the scenic Captain Cook Highway north of Cairns. This will involve widening parts of the highway, installing guardrails and removing roadside hazards.

Main roads and road safety minister Mark Bailey says the licensing measures and road works were to enhance safety for motorbike riders. "So far this year, we've had a spike in motorcycle fatalities with double the number of deaths compared to the same time last year," he says. "We need to turn these statistics around. We launched a motorcycle safety campaign ahead of

the June school holiday period to remind riders of the need to mind those bends.

"Motorbike riders are among the most likely to be seriously injured or killed on the road. That's why we're looking at reforms to motorcycle licensing, including off-road practical pre-learner training and assessments, a review of the learner licence period for motorcycle riders, and an evaluation of the skills riders should have as they move from restricted to unrestricted licences." By off-road, they mean special training facilities away from public roads, not riding on motocross tracks or trails.

The minister also foreshadowed upgrades to roads specifically for rider safety. "This year we're spending more than \$8 million across Queensland on projects to improve road safety for motorbike riders. These funds will be spent on known motorcycle black spots," he says. "We're removing trees too close to the road to give motorbike riders better visibility. We're putting up crash protection barriers and roadside warning signs. We're installing a number of flashing signs that tell drivers and riders when they're speeding.

"Road safety is everyone's responsibility. But if it's left to governments alone, it will never work. We must all work together to stem the needless loss of lives on our roads."



■ Better education will help improve safety of motorcyclists. These two probably don't need to learn how to ride a bike though

CARING & SHARING

No other community motorcycle workshop has catered to the extremist craftsman as of this stage

There is a growing trend for community motorcycle garages that is fuelling DIY custom motorcycles. They are places where inexperienced DIY mechanics and custom builders can get to use exotic and expensive machinery and get some tuition while working on their bikes.

The latest is Moto Arcade, based on community garages such as Kustom Kommune in Melbourne and Rising Sun Workshop in Sydney. Co-founder Aaron Green says they have started a crowd-funding campaign through Pozible to make the garage a reality at premises in Albion. Right now they are operating in a cramped space they call their "incubation

workshop" at Brothers Garage in Fortitude Valley. "It's served me for the past two years, working on my own motorcycles, as well as a few friends' projects," Aaron says.

So far, they have amassed quite a deal of exotic equipment that no DIY builder could ever hope to afford, including a sandblaster to clean metal parts, a lathe, English wheel, bead roller, shrinker stretcher and tube bender.

"It's a proper tube bending machine, not pipe bending that crushes the radius," says Aaron. "It won't reduce the radius more than 10 per cent so people will be able to make their own frames. Maybe down the track we'll get a planishing hammer, which is two hammers facing each other that hammer sheets of metal into shape and smooth it."

Amateur mechanics could potentially build anything from a cafe racer to a streamliner with equipment like that. Plus there's knowhow of experienced mechanics to provide expert instruction. Aaron says that because of the machinery, everyone will have to go through a safety induction course first.

"We want to encourage Brisbane's motorcyclists to get well and truly out of the box and back into what Aussies do best — invention," Aaron says.

The Albion facility is much larger, with a

members' mezzanine floor that will include a bar, lounge, design bench and a "library" full of Clymer motorcycle manuals. "No other community motorcycle workshop has catered to the extremist craftsman as of this stage," Aaron says. "Some of the fundraising we're doing to get the community motorcycle workshop alive and running is crowdfunding with a Pozible campaign. We set a \$30,000 goal, similarly to Rising Sun Garage and the Kustom Kommune."

Aaron says they will keep costs down by renting space in the same building as several other crafts businesses such as painters and even shoemakers, whose skills may be harnessed to craft custom seats.

Moto Arcade is also raffling a 1982 Kawasaki KZ440 custom street tracker for Australian supporters of their Pozible funding campaign. The membership fee to use the garage will be between \$100-\$150 to cover public liability, utilities and the safety induction. Check it out online at pozible.com/motoarcade.



■ This ain't no ordinary shared shed



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RETURN TO THE WEST

Perth motorcycle show returns

The biennial Perth Motorcycle and Scooter Show is back in 2015 and expected to attract about 20,000 people over the three days. In 2013, the event celebrated 20 years and moved to the new venue of Claremont Showgrounds, which proved successful, with ample exhibition space inside the pavilions and lots of room outdoors for stunts and activities.

The show, presented and hosted by Premiere Events, will be held from October 30 to November 1 during Motorcycle Awareness Week and will feature a big range of displays,

demonstrations and activities. Demonstrations include freestyle motocross, stunt riders and moto trials. Patrons will also be able to take part in the "come and try riding" on a dedicated track and a junior motocross track.

Displays include a custom bike show, a show and shine competition, and veteran and vintage bike displays. There will also be an indoor Motolive stage show with new-release motorcycles and bike products, reviews, fashion parades, special guests and live music. Food and drink will be available for sale and there will be a licensed bar area.

The Perth Motorcycle and Scooter Show will host a charity ride on the Saturday morning, which will be headed up by a celebrity guest. The ride starts at Crown Perth and will finish at Claremont Showgrounds so participants can then visit the show. The charity ride will support YouthFocus, a West Australian charity that helps youth dealing with suicide and other mental health issues.

In 2013, the charity ride featured Mick Doohan and more than 1500 bikes participated, raising almost \$20,000 for YouthFocus.



2015 PERTH MOTORCYCLE AND SCOOTER SHOW

Friday October 30: 10am-9pm

Saturday October 31: 10am-6pm

Sunday November 1: 10am-5pm

Visit: perthbikeshow.com.au

■ For up to date info on the show, check out the website

POST HASTE



The Postie Bike Dash runs from Newcastle out into isolated areas of NSW on Honda CT110 motorcycles."

Variety last year extended its annual Bash to a Dash of Postie Bikes and continues this year in November, raising money for needy children. The Postie Bike Dash runs from Newcastle out into isolated areas of NSW on standard and roadworthy Honda CT110 motorcycles. It leaves Newcastle on November 1 and returns on November 6.

Most of the route will be off the beaten track on gravel back roads and forest tracks, only taking the highways when they have to. However, overnight stops will be in towns with reasonable accommodation and catering facilities. The ride will be supported by a baggage vehicle that will carry luggage and basic camping equipment.

Entry cost is a \$2000 tax-deductible donation to Variety, which can be made up of fundraising or a personal donation.

Riders do have to book their own accommodation, but all meals are arranged at an extra cost of \$460.

Participant numbers are limited to 30 and riders must hold a full motorcycle licence and be aged 18 or more. They must also wear a full-face helmet and the provided hi-vis vest.

Funds raised on the Postie Dash will help to provide practical equipment and experiences to sick, disadvantaged and special-needs kids. Variety grants an average of \$800,000 a month nationally to support children with more than 133 different conditions.

Variety's work allows children to gain mobility and freedom, to get out and about in the community, be able to communicate, enhance their education, achieve independence and increase self-esteem, and where possible the assistance to help them integrate into mainstream school and activities.

Visit: variety.org.au/PostieDash



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Dave McKenna
Australian Stunt Rider

WHEN WINNERS ARE LOSERS

Australia's most stolen motorcycles

Scooters, dirt bikes and sportsbikes are the most stolen in Australia, according to the latest figures from the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council. The most stolen brands are the four Japanese manufacturers as they are also the biggest sellers.

Although Harley-Davidson is the next biggest-selling brand in

Australia, the high incidence of dirt bike theft pushes KTM into fifth place and Harley back to eighth behind SYM and Longjia scooter brands.

Scooters made up the highest proportion of thefts (19 per cent) in 2014, despite experiencing a 19.7 per cent decline in sales in 2014. They are followed by thefts of off-road dirt bikes (17 per cent) and on-road sportsbikes (13 per cent). However, dirt bike thefts may be even higher as most are not reported.

Meanwhile, the safest bikes seem to also be the heaviest and most difficult to steal, with trikes rarely taken, touring bikes representing just one per cent of all bikes stolen and cruisers two per cent.

Thanks to a new classification system for motorcycles, the NMVTRC can now review motorcycles by make, model,

year and body type. However, due to the poor nature of motorcycle theft reporting, the classification of motorcycles is unknown in about 30 per cent of thefts.

More than 8000 motorcycles are stolen each year in Australia. Other motorcycle theft statistics:

- Newer-model motorcycles are more often the target of theft, with one in four stolen less than four years old.
- Motorcycles with an engine capacity of 50cc or less (such as scooters and mini bikes) are the top theft targets, closely followed by motorcycles with an engine capacity of between 200 and 250cc.
- Two in three motorcycles are stolen from the home.
- One in six motorcycle theft victims have previously been a victim of theft.
- Over half of motorcycles stolen are not recovered.

TOP MOTORCYCLE THEFT TARGETS, 2014

ON-ROAD

STANDARD	3466
SPORTS	1049
TOURING	105
CRUISER	177
SCOOTER	1555
TRIKE	4
UNKNOWN	277

OFF-ROAD

ATV	410
DIRT	1434
MINI	210
UNKNOWN	283
TOTAL	8225

BRANDS

HONDA	1595
YAMAHA	1520
SUZUKI	739
KAWASAKI	705
KTM	469
SYM	200
LONGJIA	195
HARLEY-DAVIDSON	158
HYOSUNG	145
TGB	132



■ Honda has the unfortunate claim to being the most stolen brand in Australia

MUM LAPS OZ

“Sandra will ride her Honda Fireblade more than 36,000km around Australia talking about a topic that is being swept under the carpet.”

Sandra Moran has been riding bikes all her life so when she lost her son, Jaie, to suicide it seemed natural to just ride. On April 1, 2014, Jaie Moran suddenly took his life two days after his 22nd birthday, survived by his fiancée Jade and eight-month-old daughter Poppy.

“I just wanted to get on my bike and ride around Australia,” the 47-year-old Hervey Bay mother of three says. “I was not in the best frame of mind at the time. But Jerry (Farsoun from suicide, bullying and depression support service Overdownunder) said if you are going to get angry, use it.”

Now, with the help of Overdownunder, Sandra will ride her Honda CBR1000RR Fireblade more than 36,000km around Australia meeting people from more than 300 towns, including Tasmania, and

talking about a topic that is being swept under the carpet. Sandra is no stranger to long-distance motorcycle travel. She's only had her 'Blade two years and already it has more than 60,000km on the odometer, with trips to Phillip Island, Melbourne and Canberra, mostly solo.

She will ride solo around Australia, but hopes to encourage other riders to join her. She has posted an itinerary of dates so riders can tag along for part of the journey on overdownunder.com.au/jaiesjourney.

“I was brought up on motorbikes and cars with two brothers and a car-crazy dad,” she says. “I’ve been riding since I was 14 or 15, starting on trail bikes. I swore black and blue I’d never get a road bike, but about 10 years ago a friend was selling her VRF1000F and I bought it cheap. I don’t have a car now. My bike is my transport.”

Sandra has now made it her mission to help others by undertaking her epic “Jaie’s Journey”, talking about the risks of suicide and other emotional/mental health issues which are largely taboo in many communities. She points out that the Australian suicide toll is greater than the road toll, but gets significantly less attention and funding.

Jaie’s Journey begins in Melbourne on August 1, 2015, heads north through NSW and Queensland, across the Top End to Broome, down to Perth and across the Nullarbor, through South Australia and finishing in Tasmania on November 19. That’s more than 300 towns and 36,000km in 110 days.

“We want to get as many bikes as possible to come along for the kick-off and riders to tag along for at least part of the ride,” she says.

↓ Sandra Moran is ensuring her son’s legacy can improve the lives of others



Overdownunder will launch its new SmartPhone Personal Services App at the Melbourne launch of Jaie’s Journey. It’s designed to help those in need and provide resources at the fingertips of people who might otherwise be struggling, especially in remote and rural areas.

Sandra will be supported by the Overdownunder bus, which is a self-contained unit providing accommodation, kitchen and garage.

If you would like to host their stay in your town or provide any other support, you can email Sandra or Overdownunder at admin@overdownunder.com.au or sandra@overdownunder.com.au.

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Y2K 2.0

Jet engine motorcycle successor smashes records

A road-legal motorcycle powered by a Rolls Royce helicopter turbine engine and the successor to the famed Y2K has smashed three world speed records and one British record.

Even with blinkers, horn, mirrors and road-legal tyres, the Madmax bike set the following record at the Straightliners Speed Record event in Elvington, UK, in May 2015:

- World's fastest Turbine Motorcycle — one mile (one way): 233.7mph (376.1km/h)
- World's fastest Streetfighter — one mile (one way): 231.6mph (372.7km/h)
- World's fastest flying quarter mile for Turbine Motorcycle: 3.91 sec
- Britain's fastest Naked Motorcycle (official ACU two-way average): 225.6mph (363.1km/h)

Madmax is a continuation of the Y2K project built by Marine Turbine Technologies (MTT) in 1988. Y2K motorcycles were rare and highly sought-after. American talk show host Jay Leno has one and there was one in the Australian Motorcycle Museum near Ipswich, which is now closed.

When MTT dropped the Y2K to concentrate on mining equipment,



■ What a blast!

Maxicorp founder Zef Eisenberg visited their HQ in Louisiana in 2005 to strike an agreement to take over the development of the next generation of turbine bike. They shipped the last Y2K motorcycle to Maxicorp in the UK to use as the basis for developing its successor.

The bike now produces 404kW (542hp) of power and more than 610Nm (450 lb-ft) of torque from the engine, which is the successor to the turbine used in the Y2K. The engine is mounted in a custom frame based on the Y2K, but with carbon-fibre wheels, inverted Marzocchi 50mm forks, twin

320mm discs with six-pot ISR brake calipers, Motec engine management and unique ECU software. The project cost is estimated at about £200,000 (\$400,000) and is still in development.

Maxicorp doesn't intend to make the turbine bike for public sale, however they say on their website they "may be tempted to build one for those that can demonstrate they have sufficient money and expertise in handling such a bike for special occasions, or ideally for those that want to add possibly the most extreme bike ever made to their current collection of automotive exotica".

RUNNING MEDALS

Goodwill acts receive deserved birthday gongs

Two toy run organisers have received Order of Australia Medals in the annual Queen's Birthday Honours.

Barbara Maggs and partner Tony Jenner have organised the Cranbourne Ulysses Motorcycle Club Christmas Toy Run for 30 years. Barb, 81, is also a life member of the Motorcycle Riders of Australia and she and Tony received the prestigious Ulysses Club Dearnley Medal in 2005.

The other OAM went to John Herbert Young, of New Lambton, NSW, for service to children and the community of Newcastle. He is the founder of Bikers for Kids Newcastle in 1990 and coordinator and organiser of the Newcastle Toy Run since 1978. He also promotes the Summer Blood Challenge for Australian Red Cross Blood Service in the Newcastle region and organises visits of motorcycle riders and their bikes to the Children's Ward, John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle.



▲ Barbara Maggs and Tony Jenner have organised the Cranbourne Ulysses toy run for 30 years



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Way of Life!

THE THINGS YOU SEE

BIGSHOT

"It's dairy farmland, high altitude, and they even get frost up there in winter. Don't take the liners out of your jacket just yet. You wouldn't believe you were in far-north Queensland, would you?" We ride a great three-day loop out of Cairns on page 96.

Photo: Mark Jones







RACING LINES



Charley throws his mate Billy in the deep end to ride a race bike around the legendary Donington Park

Lots of us watch MotoGP or World Superbikes and gaze in awe at the speed, the lean angles and the bravery of the riders as they jockey for position. Knee down, elbow down and even head down! These guys are nudging shoulders at speeds over 330km/h. Looking back at the '80s and the '90s, we can still watch footage of Mick Doohan, Wayne Gardner, Eddie Lawson and Kevin Schwantz, to name just a few of the greats. All had massive spills on them scary 500cc two-stroke race bikes. I was lucky enough to spend some time with Mick and Wayne last year at Phillip Island, where they were both telling me how hard those bikes were



to ride. Just one wrong twitch of the throttle, even on the straight, and you're fired off into the sky with a high sider.

They were known as the Unrideables, but these bikes dominated the sport for about 30 years. Mick Doohan may well have won his five titles, but he also got pretty beaten up by those monsters in the process of doing so.

As we look for thrills in the 21st century, track days and race days open to the public are thriving. We too want to go out there and have a go. And I'm not talking racers or even wannabe racers, but just ordinary men and women who think, "Yeah, I wanna have a go at that".

So roll in my mate Billy Biketruck. He's a track-day virgin you might say, who we can credit to being a half-decent off-road rider, but a pretty tentative road rider. Billy has said himself that he'd rather be riding at 150km/h along the gravel tracks of Namibia than at similar speeds along the smooth, velvet, twisty roads of Switzerland or Austria. Why is that then?

Riding off-road for many years has certainly taught Billy how to move about on the bike, how to use his weight to help control the bike and how to use gears and brakes to slow the machine on difficult surfaces. Yet he feels out of his zone on



↑ Rocket Ron on a dry day. You can tell by the style!



"I can't believe they're not cancelling with the rain. How can you ride a powerful bike in weather like this?"

perfect roads. We heard about a couple of our mates whose wives had bought them a day on track at the famous Ron Haslam Race School at Donington Park Race circuit in the UK. I immediately rang up the school and booked Billy in.

Winner of three world titles, four British championships and having ridden in more than 100 Grand Prix races, Ron Haslam knows a thing or two about racing and riding. What I'm chasing here is know-how. Billy is out of his zone on fast tarmac because he's never been shown how to do it. Add to this know-how deficit, the thrill of racing a bike in a safe environment, with guidance, and you have an incredible opportunity to have your cake and eat it too!

This is the great thing about a track day. You're satisfying your dreams and tasting the excitement of the race circuit; the paddock stands, tyre warmers, mechanics, the smell of hot engines ... it's all there. At the same time, you're learning and improving your riding skills and

understanding of how bikes handle, not just on the circuit, but in the real world too.

The school was booked for mid-summer and as we rocked up to the Donington Park circuit, the rain was pouring down. Such is the way in the UK. While Billy and the boys were talking about the probability of a cancellation, I started to change into my leathers. Ron told me that they haven't cancelled a track day in more than 14 years and that the rain was a bonus for the riders. Interesting perspective, eh?

Everyone was kitted out with one-piece leather suits, boots, gloves and Arai helmets, and sent to the pre-track briefing room. You could feel the tension from Billy and the boys. Basically, they looked terrified. "I can't believe they're not cancelling with the rain. How can you ride a powerful bike in weather like this?" said a nervous Billy.

The briefing introduced the riders to the circuit and talked about racing line, braking points, gears, speed and throttle use, as well as track etiquette and warning flags. Billy was taking notes on a piece of scrap paper while the other two had gone white!

The ratio of instructors to riders is 1:2, so Billy and I were together with our instructor for what they call a sighting session where you follow the instructor around the track

to get familiar with the circuit and the bike. The double-glazed visors on the Arais were working well in the lashing rain as we sped along the pit lane onto the live track.

After just a few minutes, I looked back to see no sign of Billy. Our instructor was looking concerned, but there were no warning flags up, so we could assume Billy was OK, if not just a little "slow". Billy caught up eventually and it was pretty apparent that Valentino didn't need to worry about his career too much.

Next session was preceded with another briefing about body position, cornering and braking. This was mainly where Billy was in the wilderness. However, with a bike on a fixed paddock stand, the instructor got Billy at least looking like he was doing it right and, to be fair, it was a hard ask for him to keep up with me as I've done lots of track days. They then gave him his own instructor, which was pretty cool. Off we all went on our second session — still pouring down with rain but everyone's confidence and feel of the bike and circuit was improving.

At one stage, on the Starkey's straight I glanced over my shoulder and found Billy! My god, what have they given him and will he make the turn ahead? We finished the second track session only to find Billy and the boys bouncing around the paddock like they'd just won the lottery. The training was kicking in, the rain was becoming normal and they were all chatting and smiling like pros.

The final track session was underway now and most people seemed to be right in the zone — higher speeds, better body position, hitting apexes and braking points pretty much every time — they were flying. In the post-event briefing, all the riders were given some one-on-one advice, a certificate and a goody bag.

There is no doubt in my mind that experiencing a day like this improves your riding skills and adds to your understanding of the mechanics of riding. It's meeting this desire for excitement while at the same time equipping you with knowledge and experience to make you a more capable, safer rider. Just remember that when you leave the racetrack, and head home, you need to slow down — in fact, it might be safer to get picked up from the event!

Get yourself on a track day near you. Australia is buzzing with opportunities to do this and you'll not regret it. Billy is now talking about a racing season ... OMG!

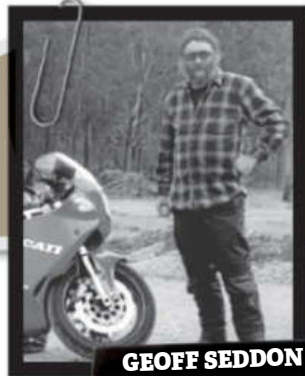
Rubber side down ...

Charley

FOR MORE INFO

Ron Haslam Race School
Donington Park Circuit, UK
haslamraceschool.com

To find out more about Charley, his events and maybe join him on an adventure ride, go to charleyboorman.com



GEOFF SEDDON

PARALLEL UNIVERSE

In a world of new bikes, it's always good to get back to reality

It's been nearly 30 years since I scored a freelance slot testing motorbikes for Bill McKinnon at what was then Australia's biggest-selling bike magazine. My first feature was a comparison between a Suzuki 750 Intruder and a Harley 883 Sportster. One bike was better by most objective criteria but the other was more fun to ride.

Welcome to the parallel universe of the motorcycle road tester. Before I was allowed out on anything faster, Bill had me put in a few thousand kilometres on a Kawasaki GPz900R, the then Bike Of The Year. Forget your hoary old Ducati, he said, this is what motorcycling is about in 1985! As always, Bill was right;

my three-year-old 900SS was a dinosaur by comparison. So I did the rational thing, sold the Ducati and bought a Sportster.

Harleys cost a bomb in the '80s and all I could afford was a 10-year-old XL 1000, what we now call an Ironhead but was then just a clapped-out pile of hard-to-start junk. I loved it; I thought I was Dennis Hopper and it's still one of the most fun bikes I've owned. By now I was testing GSX-R750s, FZ750s, Ducati FIs and all manner of quick stuff, and the Harley was just the ticket to clear the palate between courses and guard against hubris. One time at the Coastal Rally, I could not for the life of me get the blessed thing to fire. A wag yelled out that I should have kept it going when I had it

running the day before. Hilarious.

The Harley was on its last legs when I became a full-time bike journo on a salary I still can't believe I accepted. I needed to square the books in a hurry so I sold the Sportster to a Comanchero for \$4000. The new job brought with it the prospect of even more test bikes, so all I needed was a cheap dunger to tie me over between gigs.

An XS650 Yamaha in Bondi Junction for \$500 caught my eye. It was a 1976 model and missing a few bits like instruments and blinkers but had nice paint. I took along my new boss, John Rooth, who agreed it had nice paint and watched to see if it blew any smoke on my test ride. It didn't, but we soon found out why after

we adjourned to Roothy's shed to wet the baby's head, taking the precaution to check the oil before I headed home. It never stopped smoking from the moment we topped it up until the day it died.

Apart from that, it was a great bike. It had long Dunstall mufflers and sounded more like a Triumph than a Triumph, much to the chagrin of my neighbour who rode a Bonneville. Meanwhile, the test bikes were galloping towards the stratosphere — GSX-R1100s, FZR1000s, ZX10s, 851s — and it was almost a relief to dig up my open-face helmet and chill out on the XS in between.

All the bike mag journos used to get together back then for the annual Chumps Rally. It quickly became a contest to see who could secure the flashest test bikes so one year it was decreed that we all ride our own bikes instead. The weather was appalling, with roadworks out of Goulburn splashing up so much mud I could hardly keep my feet on the Yamaha's pegs. Well, I thought it was mud. Stopping in Braidwood, I noticed the plug on the crankcase where the tacho drive once lived had gone to Jesus, along with most of the engine oil. I can only think the teeming rain stopped it from seizing. I bodgied up a new plug with a five cent coin and some Silastic, refilled the sump with oil, topped up the tank with super and continued on as if nothing had happened.

The old twin eventually met its match a few years later in my mad mate Steve, who kicked a rod out of bed chasing some fast guys along the Old Road. Because it had nice paint, I was still able to sell it to a restorer for what I'd paid for it. For all the beaut test bikes, motorcycles don't get much better than that. **ARR**

"It was missing a few bits like instruments and blinkers but had nice paint"



■ This is my mate Al Fountain's bobber. It has no relationship to the XS650 in the story

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ZOE NAYLOR

RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

Go on girls: soften up and spoil your man!

feel it's fair to say that sometimes as women we can tend to give our men a hard time. I have noticed that I can be quick to judge my partner as being distant, without considering what he may be struggling with. I can become frustrated when he doesn't seem to be able to multi-task around the home. And I can tend to point my finger and blame him if I'm feeling unhappy, rather than taking responsibility for healing my own pain. I should instead appreciate that "men are from Mars and women are from Venus".

Lately I have reached a stage in my own path of wellness. I have also decided to make a conscious shift and embrace an "attitude of gratitude" mentality for my divine man. My goal is to now celebrate the wonderful, amazing qualities he has rather than focus on anything that feels limiting.

If I find myself about to make a negative remark or my thoughts are steering towards criticism, I pull myself up. I remind myself how blessed I am to have a beautiful man who loves me and how lucky I am to be able to share this life with a great partner. How easy it can be to fall into the trap of considering one's life as half empty rather than half full!

Call me old-fashioned, but I believe many of us ladies have lost the touch of how to connect with and embody our more feminine qualities. I believe it is a result of some misappropriations of the feminist movement and a "woman hear me roar" mentality. I believe we have become disconnected from our inherent softness — trying to co-exist alongside our men as equals but in doing so only becoming harder and tougher. I feel we have lost touch with the skills necessary to ensure that



■ Now there's a bloke who is in the good books!

"We have become disconnected from our inherent softness — trying to co-exist alongside our men as equals, but in doing so becoming harder and tougher."

men remain men and women, women. We are, after all, quite different from our brothers.

So, in this attitude of celebrating our men, I decided to organise a gift for my partner. Just an out-of-the-blue "thank you" for everything he's done for me. It's sometimes difficult to think of gifts for men who seem to have everything, isn't it? Luckily Australian-owned and -manufactured Draggin Jeans came to mind and it was the perfect fit.

Draggin Jeans has some of the best casual motorcycling gear around. Its range of men's and

ladies' jeans is fashion-forward and comfortable to wear. These products also ensure you're fully protected on your bike in case of an accident. It's the only casual motorcycle brand in the world to have ever passed the CE1 and 2 tests for abrasion, burst and tear resistance. I thoroughly recommend checking out the drag test video on their website, www.dragginjeans.net.

Their jeans are constructed with the highest-quality natural fibres, and are lined along all major crash points with a unique combination of the strongest fibres in the world. DuPont

Kevlar is at its core. It's hugely superior to basic woven or knitted Kevlar alternatives and the fabric is soft, breathable, flexible and non-allergenic.

I have had the privilege of working with this company over the years as an MC and also continue to wear their gear, particularly in the warmer months when I'm riding. I decided to organise a pair of BLKGEN jeans and the new Roo Hoody for my man. The Roo Hoody has the comfort of your favourite hoody, with all the protection armour you need when riding. It's also totally removable, which I love.

It really is incredible to notice the changes in your partner when you show them a little more love and appreciation. Where can you practise a little more "attitude of gratitude" in your life?

Til next time, safe travels **ARR**

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 Suzuki GSX-S1000



Way of Life!



GREGOR REYNOLDS

THE PRICE OF FATIGUE

After last month's column about big miles and long rides, I thought it might be pertinent to throw in a cautionary tale about the fatigue element. I believe that most open road accidents attributed to "speed" or "rider error" are due to some form of fatigue. We all know the level of concentration and focus required just to survive on our roads, especially fanging through the twisties or dialling up the speed. Fatigue is the biggest factor in robbing us of that focus.

As with all things, preparation and knowing your limitations are key when it comes to fatigue management. It can be as simple as wearing the appropriate gear, or stopping more often,

or carrying a water bottle and something to munch in the tankbag. Knowing yourself well enough to feel the signs, and take the appropriate measures, is vital. One mistake is all it takes.

Over the years I have ridden sleep deprived, physically and mentally exhausted, sick, sunburned, dehydrated and hypothermic. I have flirted with fatigue many times and consider myself extremely lucky to have so far come away unscathed. I do, however, know plenty of good riders who have not been quite so fortunate. One case in point is my old mate Joe. See if you can see yourself in this story.

Joe was self-employed back in the day, and he had a big week at work before a weekend away riding with his mates. He got home real late on Friday and then had to prepare the bike and pack his gear for the ride. After just a few hours sleep he was up again at 6am for

a 7am leave. Once he was on the road the cobwebs blew away and he settled into a great ride.

The boys had chosen an ambitious first day route of around 800km over some spectacular windy roads, so they all hooked in and had some fun. Joe was definitely up for it, and as usual he was right on the pace for most of the day. He was tiring by the end though, and was mighty glad to see the country pub which was their destination for the night.

Now the boys had only been cut loose for the weekend, with one overnight stay, so they meant to make it count. The beer flowed freely, and by the time the carousing and yarn spinning was done it was deep into the wee small hours. After a couple of hours sleep they were all up, feeling as woolly as a flock of sheep, and about as tractable! Breakfast consisted of lots of strong coffee and whatever they could stomach before the

long ride home.

By early afternoon Joe was tiring on his run but knew he could make it to the next servo. He had ridden tired plenty of times before. As he cranked into a left-hander, it tightened up a little. At the same time he saw a tourist bus coming the other way hogging the road in the tight corners. Joe cranked the trusty BMW boxer twin over a little more and, in an instant, the rocker box was on the deck and he was down. Unfortunately Joe didn't slide harmlessly into the weeds — he went under the bus!

Things only deteriorated from that point. The bus came to rest on top of the bike and Joe was pinned under the bike! The bus driver got out and stuck his head under the bus saying, "Are you OK mate?" Joe let him know in no uncertain terms that he was not OK, but that's when they noticed that the bike was on fire! At that point the driver decided to abandon Joe and save his passengers — he proceeded to evacuate the bus! Thankfully Joe was eventually dragged free. He was badly burned and broken, but still very much alive. The bus burned to the ground!

A couple of years later, after numerous operations and skin grafts, Joe was back on deck with all his bits working. He was back on a bike in no time and life was looking up, until he got the bill for "one tourist bus"! He was deemed to be the "at fault party" and therefore had to pay for a new bus! It took him years, but who thinks to insure their bike for unlimited third-party property? Happily for Joe, he forged ahead and has been riding ever since.

Like I said, this is just a cautionary tale. Next time you're nearing the end of a long ride or getting ragged or tired or starting to shiver, think about Joe and the shit that can happen. Stop and do whatever you have to do to freshen up and make it home. It could save you in more ways than one! **ARR**



"It took him years, but who thinks to insure their bike for unlimited third party property?"

■ Sometimes it pays not to ride when you are tired, and go pillion ...

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THE RISE OF *Retro*

Ducati has grabbed the zeitgeist of the '60s and created its most important motorcycle since the Monster. An icon indeed







STORY: NIGEL CROWLEY
PHOTOS: TIM MUNRO

I hate to start out negatively but, to be honest, the overblown marketing surrounding the Scrambler turns me off a bit. It leaves my cynical mind wondering how good the bike can be if its appeal is tied to a range of groovy clothing, branded goggles and a matching skateboard.

But here's the thing: the marketing isn't aimed at me. I've been riding bikes my whole life and consider myself a biker through-and-through. The "lifestyle" Ducati has created around the Scrambler is, in large part, aimed at those who haven't and don't. In 1993 the first Ducati Monster appealed to a whole new cross-section of society attracting, among others, hitherto non-riders onto two wheels. The Scrambler is doing just that 20-odd years later.

So leaving aside my matching-man-bag-based prejudice, what's the actual bike like? Well here's an insight for you: when you get a test bike from Ducati they mandate you collect

it in person and get a thorough run through of its key points. This can sometimes be a lengthy briefing, with tons of settings and pages of dashboard to negotiate. It's telling that when I collected the Scrambler this process took about two minutes. Turn it on; here's how to re-set the trip; off you go, is pretty much all the instruction you need. There are no ABS modes, no switchable engine maps, no traction control, no anti-wheelie (thank goodness), no fork adjustment, no nuthin'. What there is though is a fantastic bike dishing out bucket loads of good old-fashioned fun.

I love the look of this bike, more so in the flesh than pictures, right down to the flamboyant routing of the throttle cable in a big arc above the bars in proper '70s style. There are plenty of really nice details such as the LED running-light in a ring round the headlight. It is broken into four sections, mimicking the look of putting a black cross of electrical tape across the light like we used to do when we thought we were being racy, the silver Ducati logo in the centre of the



↑ Rear suspension system has preload adjustment



↑ It may only be one caliper, but it's plenty of brakes

glass setting it off.

There are plenty of other touches too. Like the cast wheels' spokes crossing over left and right like traditional wire wheels. There's even a phone charger under the seat to make sure you never miss a great selfie.

With a seat height of only 790mm (there's a 20mm lower option if you're shorter) you really sit in this bike. The first thing you notice is the unusual shape of the handlebars, which reminded me of the Raleigh Chopper I had as a kid, but which make perfect sense the minute you ride off. Ergonomically there's a great little triangle between feet, bum and bars even though my knees were quite bent when on the move.

The bike carries its 186kg so low to the ground it feels like it'll almost stand up on its own, making for very confident and stable filtering even at zero speed. The bars also fit through

gaps you don't expect, their width something of an illusion created by the narrowness of the rest of the bike. The superb mirrors add almost nothing to the width. Helping make it easy to ride, the cable-operated clutch has just the right weight to it although the narrow-ish bite-point is right at the end of its travel. This isn't an issue apart from when doing a full-lock U-turn to the right, at which point your arm and fingers are both stretched a bit far, making really fine clutch control tricky.

At the heart of the Scrambler is an 803cc air-cooled motor derived from the 796 Monster, featuring revised 11° valve overlap which ultimately gives less outright power for a given engine (56kW in this case) but more torque (68Nm) and crucially less vibration. Honestly, the flapping of my flares created more vibes than the bike and the mirrors stay crystal clear at all times.

The six-speed 'box is light and mostly accurate and the gears tightly packed, allowing you to keep the motor smack in the middle of the generous and entertaining torque curve. What's more, there really isn't much point revving this thing to its 8900rpm redline, so just buzz it through the 'box with a big braaaap of throttle in each gear. Heaps of fun! On the freeway the engine does feel slightly busy but once again, at legal speeds in top, it lands you right in the midrange, allowing for great overtaking.

Braking at the pointy end is taken care of with a superb-looking, top-spec, 330mm disc and radial-mounted Brembo monobloc four-pot caliper setup. Although requiring a decent squeeze, it gives excellent feedback. The braking force perfectly matches the bike's performance and the single disc shows off the front wheel nicely. The rear single-pot caliper has a slightly wooden feel but works fine and ►



↑ Left switch style is like the other Ducatis in the range



↑ Got to love the lettering on the back of the seat



↑ That colour is a little brighter than the first Scrambler!

DUCATI SCRAMBLER ICON



■ The 821 engine has been stylistically tweaked to suit the Scrambler's lines



↑ Neat, simple and that speedo is a little optimistic



↑ Another little lovely detail touch

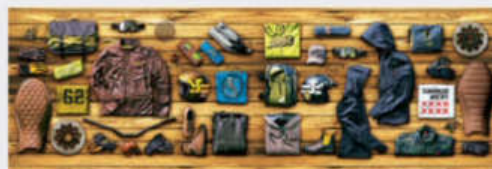


■ Even the underseat toolkit is styled right!



SUIT YOU SIR

You can create your own unique look and style by choosing from the bulging accessories catalogue. Among other items there are pipes, hard and soft luggage and tank-bags, four seats, badges and infill panels for the sides of the tank, an assortment of covers, frame plugs and headlight trims, as well as heated grips and an alarm. Oh, and don't forget the essential Scrambler logo'd canvas bike cover. As well as giving your bike a makeover, you can revamp your wardrobe while you're at it. The apparel range has leather and fabric jackets, matching Bell helmets and snazzy helmet bags, some cool-looking retro glove designs, shoes, T-shirts and hoodies, and a whole bunch of other





QUICKSPECS

Model: Ducati Scrambler Icon

Price: \$13,140 + orc (Red: \$12,990 + orc)

Colours: 62 Yellow and Ducati Red

Warranty: 24 months, unlimited km

Servicing intervals: 12,000km

Engine: Air-cooled, two valves per cylinder longitudinal 90-degree V-twin

Bore x stroke: 88 x 66mm

Displacement: 803cc

Compression: 11.0:1

Power: 55kW @ 8250rpm

Torque: 68Nm @ 5750rpm
Transmission: 6-speed gearbox, wet slipper clutch, chain drive

Frame: Tubular steel trellis

Dimensions: Seat height 790mm, weight 186kg (wet), fuel capacity 13.5L, wheelbase 1445mm, rake 24°, trail 112mm

Suspension: Front, 41mm USD forks, Rear, monoshock with preload adjustment

Brakes: Front, 330mm disc with four-piston radial-mounted caliper. Rear, 245mm disc with single piston caliper. ABS

Tyres: Front, 110/80 ZR18. Rear, 180/55 ZR17

Fuel consumption: 5.3L/100km

Theoretical range: 255km

Verdict: Retro looks with modern performance

both ends can be used aggressively in the dry before triggering the ABS.

The suspension is fairly basic, the only adjustment being rear preload, but does a decent job until you hit any big bumps or holes, which do get transferred to the rider. Fast sweepers are dealt with surprisingly well and the bike holds a rock-solid line without a hint of instability, even at triple-digit speeds. Overall it's a great compromise between low-speed comfort and high-speed composure.

Handling-wise this bike is wicked. It's one of the most planted and sure-footed bikes I've ridden in a good while and even novices will have no problems chucking it around. The hoops are 17-inch rear and 18-inch front wheel sizes and slightly unusual 180/55 and 110/80 tyre combination. They are perfectly matched and allow full use of the available grip from the dual-purpose Pirelli MT60 RS tyres (exclusive to the Scrambler). The wide tyre profiles, sticky compound and low-slung weight allow you to drag a footpeg on one side and the exhaust-guard on the other in heroic

fashion. With great leverage on the bars the rate of roll is constant and predictable and, let's face it, who doesn't like to make a few sparks on the way to work.

Fuelling was excellent and pretty much faultless from the single 50mm throttle-body EFI system. Interestingly, the second throttle body was ditched to make more room for the 13.5L tank. Rumours of snatchy delivery at low speeds were completely unfounded and in stop-start traffic I never had any issues whatsoever.

Pretty much the only thing I don't like about the Scrambler is the seat. On the freeway I was fidgeting around like I had ants in my pants after about half an hour, trying to find a comfortable spot. As well as being hard and narrow, the ridge that defines the pillion seat is just too far forward. It restricts the necessary wiggle room required to ease an aching backside. It's a shame as the ergonomics and lack of vibration make it comfortable enough to see off the few hundred kays you get before the fuel light comes on.

I didn't take the Scrambler far off-road but

before you do, turn the ABS off or you'll be in a world of trouble getting the thing stopped on a loose surface. Second, beware of attacking really rough surfaces at speed. Not only is the front suspension pushed beyond its limit, but I was also concerned about smacking the low-slung oil filter and muffler on anything large that got between the wheels. On the plus side the bars allow you to easily stand up on the 'pegs and the tyres seem to offer pretty good grip, at least in the dry. I'm not sure how many owners would have serious aspirations to take something this pretty on a proper dirt holiday, but if you wanted to you could. For the money and spec it holds its head up fine, but don't trade in your adventure bike just yet.

At the rate these things are selling both here and overseas there is a huge amount of people out there who want a simple, easy-to-ride, fun and safe bike. It also has looks that couldn't be more bang-on for the current retro vibe and at a great price point. Despite my misgivings about the marketing surrounding this bike, I couldn't help but feel pretty bloody cool every ►

THE COMPETITION

Triumph Scrambler

Having been around since 2006 and based on the Bonneville from 2001, this seems more the genuine article than the Ducati. Unfortunately it's also got 15-year-old specs. It weighs a massive 45 kilos more than the Ducati, puts out 59hp from its 865cc motor and with a seat height of 825mm, carries itself high. However, it does have some genuine kudos and if you ever wanted to feel like Steve McQueen, this'll do it. Watch this space for a makeover happening at Hinkley soon.

Moto Guzzi V7

The V7 range is very similar in concept to the Ducati, coming as it does in three basic models with a host of add-ons. In addition there are four complete accessory packs to choose from, one of which is also called the Scrambler. In this guise you get high-level pipes, off-road tyres, uprated shocks, serrated

footpegs and various other off-road bits. The seat height is the same as the Ducati at 790mm but the bike has a 12kg weight disadvantage and less power and torque, so it needs to be worked harder. Handling is also not quite as good but it's much more comfortable over distance and has close to a 400km range.

Kawasaki W800 SE

If retro is your bag, the Kawasaki certainly looks the part and there are numerous examples of it having been modded to look like a proper '70s scrambler. Take a look at the great work done by German parts manufacturer LSL, for example (www.lsl.eu). Sure, it's mechanically inferior to the Ducati, certainly in the braking department, weighs 30kg more and only makes 48hp, but it looks more authentically retro than the Scrambler. If Kawasaki doesn't do a proper factory version of something like the LSL bike very soon, I'll eat my beanie.

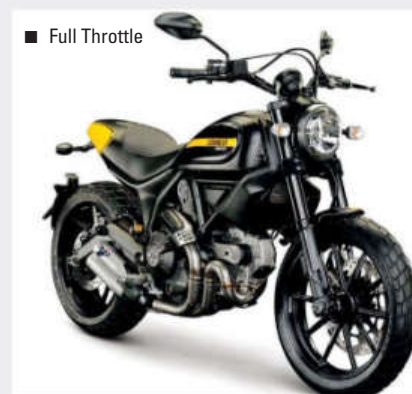
FOUR INTO ONE DOES GO

There are three models in the Scrambler family in addition to the Icon. All based around essentially the same bike, pay your money and take your choice!

■ Classic



■ Full Throttle



■ Urban



time I got on the thing. Judging by the amount of comments and looks it got, the design team have totally nailed it. Ducati has brilliantly placed this bike so as to appeal to a huge market: L-platers and scooter riders moving up, commuters, born-again bikers, women, current riders looking for something a bit different or a second bike, and crucially, non-riders who might not have even considered buying a bike before.

This may well be the most accessible and least-intimidating 800cc motorcycle of recent times, which also happens to be the best-selling bike in Italy right now. They are also shifting by the crate-load over here. If Ducati offered a version with uprated suspension and a chunk more power, they might even scoop me up. **ARR**

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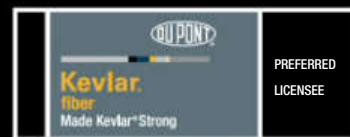


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THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TOUR

Don't get off the beaten track too much, but like your taste of adventure now and then? Then the XR*x* is your perfect travelling partner





“Rev it or let it cruise, this motor has plenty of guts”



■ The front-end is best suited to road riding, but is great off-road

STORY: MICK MATHESON
PHOTOS: JEFF CROW

The question is not whether the XR is good, because we’ve already established that the new-generation Triumph Tigers are sensational.

The question is where it stands in comparison with its more off-road-oriented XC stablemate. And that question, as it turns out, is easy to resolve. Major contrasts in ride and handling put substantial space between the two models and justify Triumph’s decision to produce both. I know this for certain after swapping between the two on a road that the XC might seek out but the XR ate up.

Somewhere up in the Otways we took a minor road that was rough, narrow, overhung with ferns, littered with bark, constantly damp and continuously winding. It was everything a Tiger rider might want, and if it’d been unsealed it would have been an XC pilot’s wet dream. But it was tarred and the XC’s 21-inch front wheel slowed the steering too much and its higher centre of gravity reduced its ability to flick from apex to apex. The XR was pinpoint accurate, quick steering, responsive, easy and

faster without trying to be. It demanded far less effort from me to swing along that little road at a fun pace without putting me at risk of losing the front on the slippery tar, of copping a faceful of oncoming car around the blind corners, or running wide out of bends.

As a bonus, this wasn’t just a plain-Jane XR Tiger I was riding, but the up-spec XR_x with its traction control and other electronics, so as I got comfortable with its superior handling, I pushed it harder on the throttle. By the time the road opened up into undulating farmland, the XC_x I’d been running with was a distant headlight in the mirrors. The XR_x had convinced me it’s the better road bike, even on the crappiest roads around. The XC_x should be left to the riders who want to prove themselves when the roads turn to tracks.

The quickest way to tell an XR from an XC is to look at the wheels. If they’re cast ones, it’s an XR, and you don’t have to look much closer to see the front one is a smaller 19-inch diameter. There’s also the front mudguard, which is a standard wheel-hugger on the XR, but a high-mounted beak under the headlight of the XC. It’s not quite so obvious that the XR is lower,

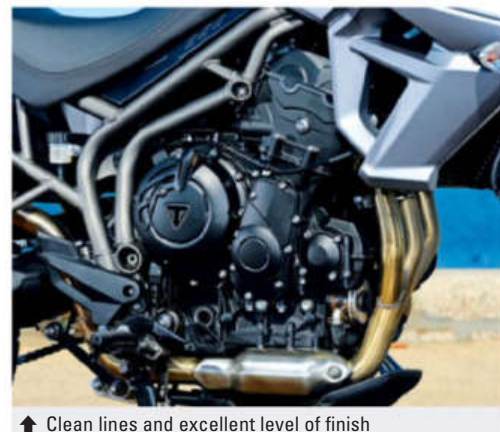
X FACTOR

The little “x” of the Tiger XR_x indicates it's chock-a-block with extras, both physical and electronic.

The stock XR comes with traction control and anti-lock brakes, both of which can be turned off. That's a good start, but the XR_x adds the intermediate modes for off-road use. The XR_x has the four engine maps, but the XR doesn't. The electronic system on the XR_x gives you two pre-programmed combinations of engine map, TC and ABS — Road and Off-Road — and also permits you to create you own combination of parameters in its Rider mode.

The XR_x has hand guards, unlike the XR, and they are well designed to keep some of the chill off your hands. Its screen can be adjusted without using tools, its seats are more comfortable, it has a centre stand, there's an additional 12V outlet and you get the joy of cruise control. You can fit a tyre-pressure monitor to the XR_x.

All this costs you an extra \$1500. That's not a lot to pay for so many more useful and enjoyable features.



↑ Clean lines and excellent level of finish



↑ The exhaust is tucked up out of harm's way

but you feel it the moment you swing a leg over it. The adjustable seat can be set at either 810 or 830mm, both lower than the XC's lowest choice of 840mm. Put your full weight on the seat and the height difference is increased ever so slightly because of an almost invisible change between XC and XR — the suspension. The XR has Showa suspension front and rear, which is softer and plusher than the XC's more aggressive WP suspension.

Then there's the significant issue of money. There's \$1500 between the XR and XC, though the gap drops to \$1100 between XR_x and XC_x. You can do a lot with that kind of cash in your pocket rather than the dealer's. The XR looks better all the time, doesn't it?

Before we steer away from comparisons, I'll mention the XR's German rival, BMW's F700GS. Like the XR, the 700GS is the road-runner in its range, complemented by the bush-

ready F800GS. However, unlike the BMW, the Triumph isn't hobbled by a detuned version of its sibling's engine. In any speed contest, the Triumph eats the BMW — and does it with a smoothness only an inline triple can achieve.

The Tiger 800 powerplant is a ripper. It's good for just shy of 100hp, which is not only the best in its class but is a healthy output by any standard, and it comes on endless torque. This engine is turning out well over 80 per cent of its quota of Newton-metres before 2000rpm and doesn't fall lower until it's nudging the rev limiter at 10,000rpm. Rev it or let it cruise, this motor has plenty of guts. Funnily enough, it's not too hard to stall it when you take off, but I reckon that's just its smoothness fooling you into being lazy with the throttle and clutch.

The four different throttle maps change the engine's character by dictating how quickly the butterflies react to your wrist. They don't

change the power output, though, so you have access to all of it in any map. In Sport mode, it's as if the Triumph didn't have ride-by-wire technology and a cable was connected directly to the butterflies for instant action. It's fun and involving, and if you use it hard you'll appreciate the XR's more sporty handling and traction. Change the settings to Road mode and the initial hit of power — which can feel harsh in Sport mode when you're not being sporty — is softened ever so slightly to make power delivery a more civilised event. The butterflies open a little slower than your wrist might move, and progress is smoother as a result.

I can't pick any difference between Road and Off-Road, though the latter is meant to be a tiny bit slower again in response. If you really want to damp down the throttle action, select Rain mode and you'll feel a much more sluggish effect — great when traction is tenuous and care needed. ►

“I was soon so trusting of its capabilities that I was happy to turn off traction control and let the feedback warn me before I spun up the rear wheel too much”



↑ Dash is instantly recognisable as a Triumph one



↑ Cruise control is switched from the right bar

TRIUMPH TIGER 800 XRX



The motor pulls from very low revs, lugging away in sixth gear as low as 2000rpm or so, but there's not really much excuse to working it like that because it is backed by one of the best gearboxes in motorcycling, with a delightful shift action urging you to use it. Keep the tachometer needle swinging in the midrange and you'll rarely want more. Rev it hard to release the full potential and you'll be grinning. The only limit then is how much power you can put to ground.

The XR comes stock with tyres biased about 80 per cent to on-road use, so they grip pretty well. The fatter contact patch up front compared with the XC gives it much better traction when the front's loaded up, and it's far more confident piling into a corner on the brakes. With sharper steering geometry, lighter wheels and a lower centre of gravity, the XR is certainly the better one at carving up a mountain road, though you still wouldn't accuse it of having breathtaking agility — it remains a rangy machine with relatively slow steering when it's up against a pure road bike. The other side of that coin is the unshakable stability it has.

The shorter suspension travel results in more consistent handling with a lot less fore and

T FOR TOURING

After launching the XR and XR^x, Triumph added an XRT to the range of new Tigers. It's equipped with all sorts of gear for long-haul riding.

It's based on the XR^x and all of its features, and for its price of \$17,890 (plus on-roads costs) you also receive:

- A 650W alternator instead of the 476W one
- Heated seats and grips
- Fog lamps
- A third 12V outlet
- Racks on which to mount aluminium Expedition panniers, but you still have to buy the panniers
- A GPS mounting kit, but not the GPS
- A tyre-pressure monitoring system
- An aluminium radiator guard and a machined brake reservoir

“The lower-spec XR is more the roadie; the XR^x is more adventurous”



↑ Two Tigers displaying an array of accessories

aft pitching. However, it also has a downside that detracts from everything else that makes this the better road bike: there's less cornering clearance than the XC, and in fact less clearance than many bikes have. It's easy to scrape the hero knobs on the footpegs, and if you happen to ride into a decent mid-corner dip while leaned over, the Tiger will hammer its side stand lug into the tarmac with alarming force.

The XR's Showa suspension is on the soft side, as you'd expect of this style of bike, and while it's clear the XC's WP suspension is higher quality, the Showa kit is up to the job most of the time. If you throw the bike around aggressively, you'll begin to feel it get loose — and you'll probably dig in that side stand lug a few times — but take classically smooth lines while steadily feeding in the power and the Triumph's handling is sweet. Ridden like this, it was a joy along the Great Ocean Road.

Same when you hit gravel roads, where the XR is very comfortable. Even with the road-biased tyres, I was soon so trusting of its capabilities that I was happy to turn off traction control and let the feedback warn me before I spun up the rear wheel too much. When I

used the off-road TC setting, which permits a reasonable amount of wheel spin, I could rely on its intervention to keep things on track. I rate the Triumph system highly. Same for the ABS: in off-road mode the rear ABS is deactivated while the front is set to cope with the demands of gravel roads, and it works a treat — I always prefer it to having no ABS at all.

On horrible, rutted, sandy, rocky tracks where the Tiger XC is the go, the XR gets along well enough, just not as enthusiastically. Take it easy and you'll get through almost anything, while at the same time demanding less of the shorter suspension travel and not putting the softer cast wheels at risk of damage. The lower seat height is also a benefit to less experienced off-road riders who are quicker to put their feet down. Standing up is easier now because the handlebars are a little taller and the footpeg rubbers have been designed to squish down under your weight until your boots get a secure grip on the pegs. So go ahead and explore on the XR.

When you're back in town, the roles are reversed and the XR is much nicer than the XC: height, manoeuvrability, the lot. The XR's

a great commuter.

It's also a great tourer. The engine and all-round handling suit the role perfectly, and the terrific comfort only enhances it. As well as the adjustable seat, the handlebars can be moved forward or back 20mm on their mounts, and on the XR^x you can adjust the screen without using tools. I preferred it in its upright position, where it pushed a lot of the airstream away without inducing much buffeting at all. The XR^x is better for the inclusion of a more comfortable pair of seats than on the XR. The generous space, relaxed posture and reasonable wind protection add up to low-effort mile-eating. The Tiger will carry a pillion in comfort, though cranking up the rear shock is essential.

The bike's range can be great if you ride economically, when it's possible to keep fuel consumption down to 4.5L/100km, in which case you could go more than 400km on the 19-litre tank. Engine revisions for 2015 have improved economy by a claimed 17 per cent, though my average of 5.9L/100km didn't reflect that.

The engine revisions were largely detail changes aimed at greater efficiency and ►

TRIUMPH TIGER 800 XR

reduced heat, the latter a matter of comfort. The different bodywork compared with the 2010-14 model is also intended to reduce the amount of heat on your legs, and it works though it hasn't eliminated the effect. The changes included a larger radiator which, on the XR, does not get a guard — probably not much of a worry for most XR owners but a Radguard or similar would be worthwhile protection against thrown rocks on the kinds of roads you might travel.

The panniers available from Triumph are solid, and mounted to a revised “wobble” system that allows them to move sideways. That's to improve stability at speed and it seems to work. The exhaust-side box is smaller than the other one, but if you need even more room, buy the enormous top box in Triumph's catalogue. Tank bags and a zillion other accessories are there for those who want them. I'd opt for the heated grips straight away.

The Tiger XR has the same petite instrument pod as the XC, with a tacho gauge

that includes warning lights, and an LCD panel that shows you everything else. You get a basic trip meter setup on the XR but a full trip computer with the XR_x. The button for switching riding modes is on the dash, and it's a bit awkward to use.

That button's position and the reduced cornering clearance are about the only real criticisms I have of the XR_x, which is a well-designed all-round bike. I think the fact that Triumph is pushing it as the road bike of the Tiger 800 range is spot on, but if it wasn't for the XC models, we'd all be shifting the context to dual-purpose use — and we shouldn't forget that that's exactly what the XR_x is. The lower-spec XR is more the roadie; the XR_x is more adventurous.

It's a fabulous bike for exploring all sorts of back roads and unsealed routes, and if you're not getting well off the beaten track, it's undoubtedly an easier and more willing bike than the XC. With its smoothness, comfort, performance and versatility, the Tiger 800 XR_x is a winner. **ARR**

QUICKSPECS

Model: Triumph Tiger 800XR_x

Price: \$16,590 (plus on-road charges)

Colours: Crystal White, Phantom Black, Caspian Blue

Warranty: 2 years, unlimited distance

Servicing intervals: 6000km

Engine: Liquid-cooled, DOHC, 12-valve, inline triple. Variable TC and throttle maps

Bore x stroke: 74 x 61.9mm

Displacement: 800cc

Compression: 11.1:1

Power: 70kW @ 9250rpm

Torque: 79Nm @ 7850rpm

Transmission: Wet multiplate clutch, 6-speed gearbox, chain final drive

Frame: Steel-tube perimeter

Dimensions: Seat height 810–830mm, weight 188/213kg (dry/wet), fuel capacity 19L, wheelbase 1530mm, rake 23.9°, trail 92.4mm

Suspension: Front, Showa 43mm USD fork, 180mm travel. Rear, Showa monoshock with adjustable preload, 170mm travel

Brakes: Front, 2 x 308mm discs, 2-piston calipers. Rear, 225mm disc with 1-piston caliper. Variable ABS

Tyres: Front, 110/90-19. Rear, 150/70R17

Fuel consumption: 5.8L/100km

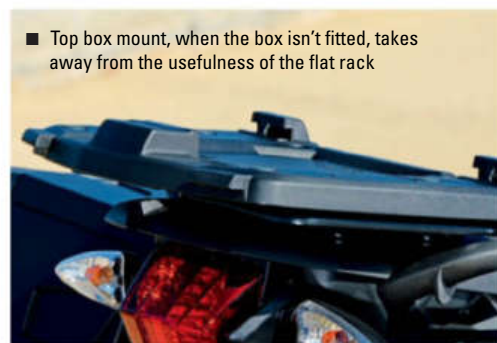
Theoretical range: 325km

Verdict: Supremely capable adventure bike and tourer

■ The panniers and top box add to the Tiger's all-road, all-jobs cred



■ Top box mount, when the box isn't fitted, takes away from the usefulness of the flat rack





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DANCING IN A NEW WAY

This might be the bike you'll always find in the kitchen at parties, but when you draw it out it'll party like no other

■ The F800R's styling is sharper from every angle



STORY: MICK MATHESON
PHOTOS: JEFF CROW

There are so many cool naked bikes around that each one has to stand out to get any attention. It's a hard market to crack unless you've got something super exciting, competitively affordable or unique in a special way. So far, BMW's F800R hasn't cracked it, but it's not for want of trying. If it were at a party, it'd be the shy one in the corner, and unless you head over there to engage it in conversation, you might miss the fact that it's got a story to tell and some party tricks to pull out.

Champion stuntman Chris Pfeiffer does mind-blowing tricks on an F800R, showing us what's possible on the cheeky little BMW. At the other end of the scale, if you ignore a few GSs, the F800R has long been the cheapest way into BMW ownership. There are other, smaller things, too, but none of it has fanned flames in the imaginations of buyers and the model has not been a big seller. So now, the F800R has

“The ABS is the most advanced system BMW currently uses so it's highly effective, quite smooth in operation and rarely comes on before you think it should”

come up with a few new party tricks.

ABS is standard, of course, and now almost every F800R sold in Australia will be equipped from the factory with the optional (but virtually compulsory) \$985 Traction Package of electronic traction control (ASC in BMW's case), electronic suspension adjustment (ESA) and a tyre-pressure monitoring system (RDC). This may make it cost almost \$1000 more than the \$13,100 base price BMW has set, but the real significance of this is that the F800R is an early adopter of this excellent and advanced technology — and it's the only thing in this class



↑ The new symmetrical headlight improves the F800R's looks



↑ Pretty cowl and useful rack are part of BMW's ex-factory options

FACTORY FIT

As well as the \$985 Traction Package covered in the main story, BMW Australia offers the F800R with two other ex-factory options.

The Touring Package adds \$250 and brings useful gear: a centre stand, a good luggage rack, a power socket and the mounts for panniers.

The price goes up by \$275 because of the Dynamic Package, which is aesthetic rather than truly dynamic: an LED taillight, stylish engine spoiler, and a pillion seat cowl.

An alarm will cost you \$505, and the metallic blue-based paint schemes come at a modest premium of \$75. The taller Comfort seat option is \$190, a lower seat is available at no charge, but you can't have either in combination with the Dynamic Package thanks to the seat cowl; buy the seats as accessories and leave the cowl in the cupboard, or ditch the Dynamic option.



and price range that lets you have it.

Do you need traction control on a humble roadster that, even after a boost in performance for this updated model, produces only 90 horsepower? Yes! Apart from the pitfalls of oil spills, tram tracks and greasy city streets, it's possible to get yourself into trouble through sheer over-exuberance on this nimble, sweet-handling machine on which deep lean angles come naturally. Twice I had it step out on me, and twice the ASC brought it back into line. I didn't expect the slides either time, but there were extenuating circumstances ... and isn't that the case every time a motorcycle's electronic aids come into play to save you?

Both times I was enjoying the bike's increased power — up from 64kW to 66, all on the same nice torque that peaks just before 6000rpm with 86Nm — and its intuitive steering. The naked F spears into corners better than ever on new upside-down forks that have subtly improved control and feedback. Sure, you can tell they're not off the S1000R, but they're good stuff in

this context. They reduce unsprung weight by an unspecified amount and are rigid enough to complement the powerful braking from the new radial-mounted front brakes. I set off after a fast rider on some of those sensational winding roads north-east of Melbourne and immediately came to love the way the F 800 R hustles into bends and carries plenty of corner speed. And that only encouraged me to follow up with all the power I could lay down.

The parallel-twin 798cc engine is a sweetheart, with a 360-degree crank throw that helps give linear power delivery and healthy traction. You don't have to rev it hard, and can lope along in the lower midrange all day, but there's immense satisfaction to be had from stretching the revs all the way past peak power at 8000rpm — it has a rather retro character to it, the way it builds revs in a deliberate way. It's certainly not the most powerful in the class, but it gets you involved in the process of going faster by making you wring it a bit, not leaping forward like you've only had to flick a switch. So

that's what I was doing out of all these corners, and always after I'd tried as hard as I could to keep the pace high through the apex.

So when I rode through an unseen damp patch, still leaned way over and now with the throttle wide open, the rear tyre didn't have a chance. The traction control system, though, was there for us and recovered the situation almost before I'd realised there was a problem. The second slide that ASC saved was on a dry bit of road, but it was just a slippery piece of work in a hollow. Same story — all over in a moment and not even a hit of adrenaline to show for it.

This ASC system is not even BMW's most advanced set-up, but it's quite effective and, if you need to, you can turn it off. I doubt that will happen very often on F800Rs, not unless there's a would-be Chris Pfeiffer on board. You can turn off the ABS, too. Again, unless you've been playing silly buggers, you wouldn't do it, and it's the most advanced system BMW currently uses so it's highly effective, quite smooth in operation ►

BMW F 800 R

■ A good bike for day-tripping: The F800R's comfort and performance encourage it

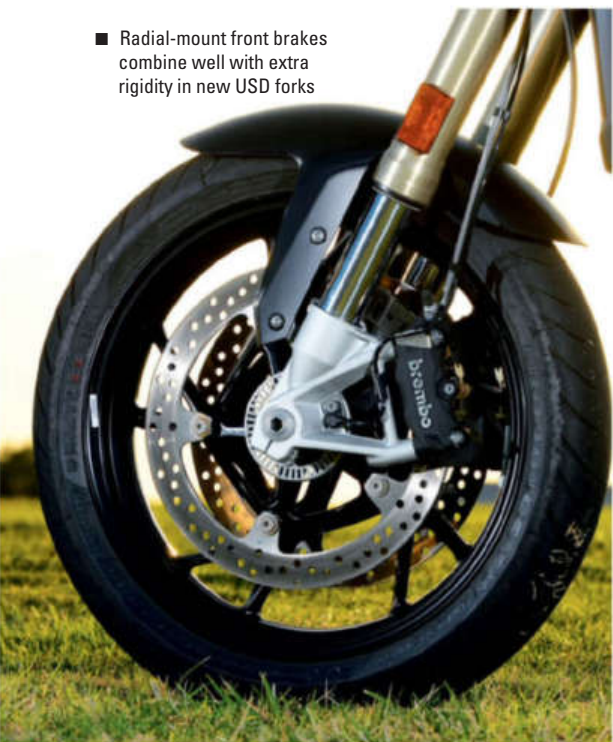


“As fun as it is to push the F 800 R hard on the right roads, it’s fair to say that’s not the sole motivation of the bike’s owners or the majority of its owners”

■ The standard seat is complemented by a lower option and a more padded one



■ Radial-mount front brakes combine well with extra rigidity in new USD forks



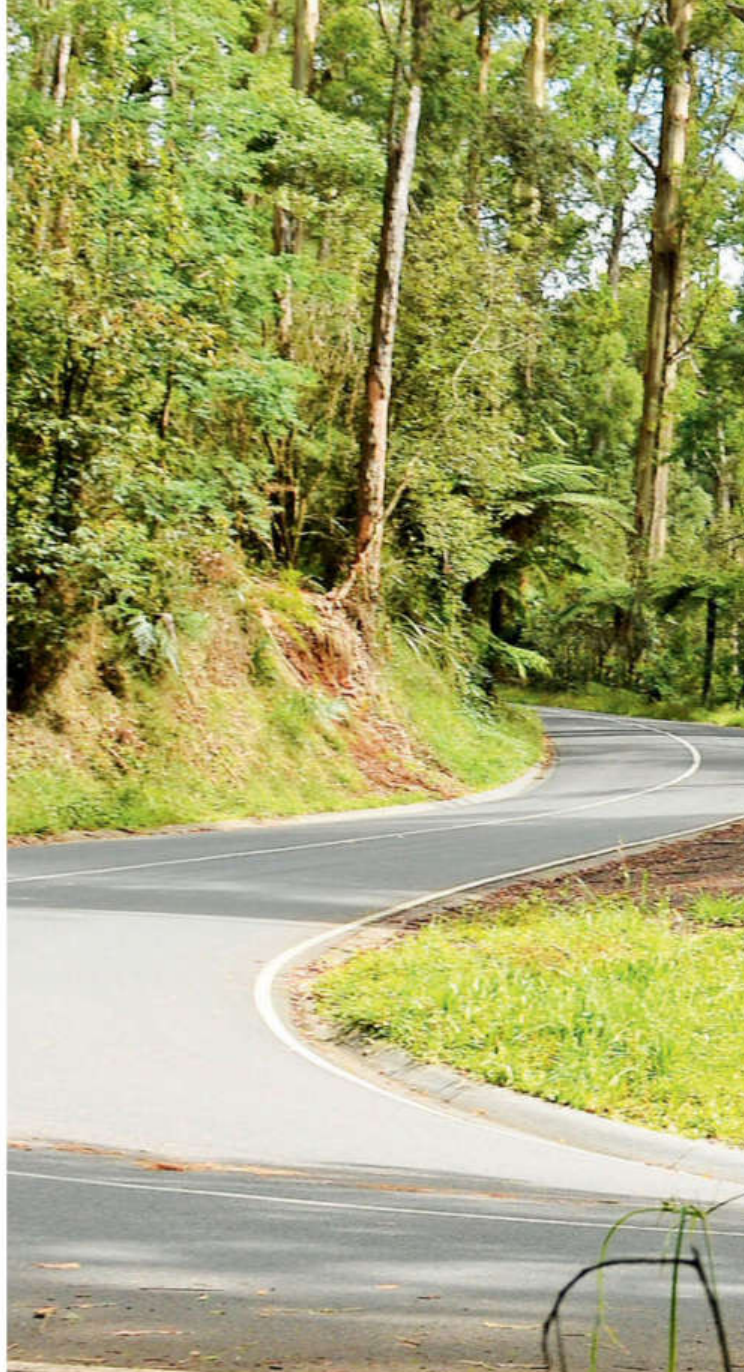
↓ The R's speedo and tacho are simple in layout and easy to read.



and rarely comes on before you think it should. Usually that only occurs at the rear when there's a bit of chatter on a rough surface while you're standing on the pedal.

As fun as it is to push the F800R hard on the right roads, it's fair to say that's not the sole motivation of the bike's designers or the majority of its owners. Commuting, light touring and day rides are of at least equal importance to this all-rounder. In the city it's great — slightly larger and slower handling than a CB500 or even an MT-07, but slick between traffic and very easy to manage all the same. On the other hand, those other bikes don't quite have the physical size or the self-assured stability that makes the BMW so good when the speed limits, roads and traffic open up as you leave town.

The same upright, in-control riding position that works well while commuting is very comfortable even a bit beyond 100–110km/h. There's actually a hint of a crouch to it, not so much that it puts weight on your wrists — though that balance will change if you are much shorter than my lanky 183cm — but





↑ The R has chain drive but would a belt be more suitable for most owners?



↑ The parallel-twin engine is compact and forms a stressed part of the chassis

enough to let the airstream act as a pillow rather than a battering ram. The position is compact, which stopped me from leaning forward into a sporting position when I was attacking corners, but it's not cramped. The new handlebars give you a little more room up top and the footpegs don't bend your legs too tightly now that they've been brought forward 10mm. They've also been dropped 10mm, but as the seat is 10mm lower too, now at 790mm, you don't get any benefit. If 790mm is still too tall for you, there's a low-seat option at no cost that brings it down to 770mm. The Comfort seat, a \$190 option, is much nicer than either of the others.

The glitch in the F800's comfort is the engine's vibration, which is not easily overlooked. In spite of the clever and substantial balance system built into the engine, you feel it shake through the chassis and handlebars, gently at low revs but always increasing with engine speed. This powerplant will never be as smooth as a triple or four, nor even most other twins.

The ride is pretty good, though. The ESA changes only the rear suspension's compression damping settings. You can set it to Sport, Normal or Comfort and it makes a worthwhile difference, particularly after you've wound the handy rear preload knob to set the spring rate to suit you and your load. I often changed the damping settings depending on the road and my riding mood, and was rewarded with a ride quality that matched. It's just a matter of using the button on the handlebars, so why not? On the Comfort setting the ride is plush. It's a pity the front end is non-adjustable, but I guess there's a limit to what's possible at this price. The front feels harsh sometimes, but works pretty well overall.

The tank's a small 15 litres, and while you can stretch it to maybe 350km before running dry, in more varied riding you're likely to be looking for fuel before 250km have rolled by. That's acceptable for a bike like this.

The F800R comes with heated hand grips and a fairly detailed trip computer that displays its info on the LCD section of the dashboard. The ►



dash is funky, with the speedo and tacho gauges stacked one on top of the other where they're clear and comprehensible. With the Touring package, a rack endows the bike with some luggage-carrying convenience, and without it you won't get a lot of stuff on there. The rack rises higher than the pillion seat, and it'd be more useful if it were closer to flush to make a large patch for bags. Tank bags and panniers will expand the luggage capacity dramatically, of course, and they're waiting for you in the BMW catalogue.

The fact that the F800R comes with chain drive is perhaps a negative point to many potential customers who'd be better serviced by the belt drive system fitted to the F800GT, but apart from being a bit dirty and demanding regular maintenance, a modern chain isn't much of a burden, and it does give you the option of altering the gearing. It'd be more exciting with a shorter final drive ratio, but this year's gearbox has shorter first and second gears anyway so I didn't feel it needed altering.

The main update we haven't covered yet is the roadster's styling, which is less lopsided now that the asymmetrical headlights have given way to a symmetrical setup. The bike's profile is still angular and its up-close appearance full

of shapes and edges that make it look like a collection of bits rather than a neat unit. To my eye the all-white model looks OK, the white and the blue ones with black panels look awkward, and the blue-and-white scheme is a mishmash of random shapes. No matter how you look at it, the F800R isn't pretty in the way so many other current naked bikes are. Monsters and Street Triples spring to mind immediately.

I suspect that its styling is part of the BMW's struggle in its crowded market. To many buyers, the attractions of excellent electronics like ASC are a big selling point, but many others are mesmerised by the skin-deep beauty of different bikes. There's also the fact that the F 800 R comes across as sweet rather than exciting, especially when you're reading on-paper power figures and the like. Regardless of BMW's upgrades and the fun you can have on the roadster, they need to go further to really make an impact on the customers they're not appealing to.

However, those buyers who see the true beauty and performance in the F800R will not find it anywhere else. The F800R's solidness, safety, surprising handling and all-round willingness stand it apart from so many other bikes. It is a unique bike with unequalled features. **ARR**



↑ Fuel tank sits under the seat in true F-series fashion



↑ Comfy ride position is not cramped but doesn't easily let you lean into it in corners

QUICKSPECS

Model: BMW F 800 R

Price: \$13,100 (plus on-road charges)

As tested with options: \$15,095+orc

Colours: Light White, Light White/Black Satin Gloss, Racing Blue Metallic Matt/Black Satin Gloss, Racing Blue Metallic Matt/Light White

Warranty: 2 years, unlimited kilometres

Servicing intervals: 10,000km

Engine: Liquid-cooled, 8-valve, DHOC, parallel twin. Switchable TC

Bore x stroke: 82 x 75.6mm

Displacement: 798cc

Compression: 12:1

Power: 66kW @ 8000rpm

Torque: 86Nm @ 5800rpm

Transmission: Wet multiplate clutch, 6-speed gearbox, chain drive

Frame: Aluminium perimeter

Dimensions: Seat height 790mm, weight 202kg (wet), fuel capacity 15L, wheelbase 1526mm, rake 26°, trail 100mm

Suspension: Front, non-adjustable USD fork, 125mm travel. Rear, monoshock, manual preload and electronic compression damping adjustments, 125mm travel

Brakes: Front, 2 x 320mm discs, 4-piston calipers. Rear, 265mm disc, 1-piston caliper. Switchable ABS

Tyres: Front, 120/70ZR17. Rear, 180/55ZR17

Fuel consumption: 5.3L/100km (average)

Theoretical range: 280km

Verdict: Sweet, solid, safe roadster that can be lots of fun

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PERFECT STAR

Learners and novice
riders have never
had it so good

STORY: MARK HINCHLIFFE
PHOTOS: DAVID COHEN AND MH

These days, learners are spoilt for choice. Just a few years ago, choices were crotch rockets spewing out blue smoke or 250cc scaled-down cruisers. If you were over five foot and weighed more than 70kg, the suspension wouldn't support you. If you could fold yourself into the type of pretzel shape required to ride the machine, that is. After a year or two you would trade it in at a small

proportion of its original price. Your next purchase would be for a new, bigger bike that suited you and had some safety features such as decent suspension and ABS.

Today there are thousands of these relic learner bikes rusting away in sale yards. Now learners have a vast range of bikes to choose from under the national Learner Approved Motorcycles Scheme (LAMS). And king of the LAMS bikes specialists seems to be Kawasaki.

Yes, they're best known lately for producing the insane supercharged H2R roadbike. ►



↑ Plenty of power and feel from rear brake with ABS control

But at the other end of the spectrum they have a successful and growing range of LAMS bikes. Their Ninja 300 was the top-selling bike last year and the KLR650 has been the number one adventure bike for years. They also have the new Z300, Z250SL, Ninja 650L, ER-6nL, Versys 650L, KLX250 and KLX150L.

The Vulcan S is the latest LAMS machine and fills the missing link in their cruiser range. It is the challenger to the Yamaha XVS650 and the instant-hit Harley-Davidson Street 500 for the new title of best-selling cruiser. Like the Street 500, it's water-cooled and a more modern interpretation of the cruiser, rather than the classic style. Instead of trying to disguise the radiator, they actually accentuate it with brushed aluminium guards on the sides. It's a bold and modern statement that is reflected in the rest of the design.

There's no chrome like a traditional cruiser and the styling is more of a swooping flow than classic V-shapes. The oblong headlight is more reminiscent of a modern V-Rod than a classic Softail. And that low-down, shorty, matte-black bazooka muffler looks plain mean.

There is a lot to like about the looks of the Vulcan S from its classy and easy-to-clean mag wheels to its modern instrumentation and LED taillights. Build quality is the usual high Japanese standard and the purple paintwork with blue flecks on our test bike is lustrous and

“Kawasaki has also been practical and clever with the design and dimensions of this bike to ensure it attracts a wide variety of riders”

deep. My only complaint is the rather out-of-place truck-style black mirrors. Very practical, but simply ugly.

Kawasaki has also been practical and clever with the design and dimensions of this bike to ensure it attracts a wide variety of riders. Learner or novice bikes don't just attract new riders. They are also a purchase for returned riders, a big proportion of females and also short riders, daunted by high and/or heavy motorcycles.

So Kawasaki has kept the kerb weight down to 226kg fully fuelled and ready to go. They have also made the riding position adaptable in a design they refer to as Ergo-Fit. This includes easy-reach handlebars (\$89) that shorten the reach by 44mm, comfort seats (\$334.99) that shorten or lengthen the distance from the bars

X FACTOR

Novice cruiser riders love to customise and personalise their bikes, says spokesman Milo Dokmanovic. "There is a lot of emotional investment in your first bike. That's why they love to customise and personalise their motorbike."

The Kawasaki Vulcan S satisfies that desire with plenty of genuine accessories which include a windshield, panniers, rear seat, extra lights, sissy bar, GPS kit, helmet lock, rear rack, power socket and gear indicator.

While Kawasaki doesn't yet have a muffler replacement, there are aftermarket versions available. Milo says the panniers and windshield are the most popular accessories. "The DC socket helps with touring and long distance and the gear indicator is useful, especially for a learner."

You can buy the accessories separately or as kits. The "light tourer kit" features a luggage rack and leather saddlebags with brackets for \$1965 (plus fitting), while the "mid tourer kit" includes a windshield, rear rack and bags for \$2750.



■ From head on it looks more muscle bike than cruiser



↑ Parallel-twin engine is tucked away tightly



↑ The adjustment available in the footpegs is a benefit to all rider sizes

by 53mm and shift linkage rods that move the footpegs forward or back by 25mm. The clutch and brake levers are also adjustable for reach.

When I first walked up to the Vulcan S, it looked a little small. It's a low and compact unit, but it's not diminutive like a 250cc cruiser. This is a full-size bike. It looks lower because of the slammed rear end that hugs the wheel, thanks to the laydown shock. Our test bike had the standard seat and handlebars and the footpegs set in the mid position.

I'm just over six foot (182cm) and I found it a quite comfortable reach to the bars and riding it around town it felt just fine. It wasn't until I hit the highway that I felt the longer seat would be better and perhaps the forward controls could be kicked out another couple of centimetres.

Kawasaki's Ergo-Fit guidelines say that the Reduced Reach option suits riders 167cm

(5ft 6in) and shorter, while Extended Reach accessories are for those 182cm (6ft) or taller. I didn't feel at all cramped, although on a long ride, my "dicky" left knee started to ache, so I swung my heel over the footpegs to stretch my leg for a while.

The low seat height of 705mm and narrow waist should be good for all but the extremely vertically challenged to comfortably get their feet down at the traffic lights. So it's pretty much going to fit any sized rider and despite my initial impressions, it doesn't look or feel like a small bike once it's on the road.

Bucking cruiser tradition, the Vulcan S is powered by a fuel-injected, water-cooled, DOHC, 8-valve, 649cc parallel twin, rather than a V-twin. It's the Ninja 650 engine, but with a revised cylinder head, intake funnels and camshaft profiles. It's tuned for more low- to mid-range torque.

Triumph has had a lot of success with parallel-twin cruisers over the years and Honda is now having some success with its parallel-twin cruisers. So it's not a new concept; it just feels different. It doesn't have the throb you get from from a V-twin cruiser, nor the engine braking or low-rev pull. Instead, it tingles at high revs, spins more freely and has strong midrange pull. Under 3500rpm it shudders a little, so you have to keep the engine spinning around 4000rpm for best results. From there it winds out to a soft limiter at 9900rpm that is stratospheric by cruiser standards.

The parallel-twin is married to a six-speed, close-ratio gearbox and chain drive. This is another characteristic unusual for a cruiser. The gearbox is slick with neutral easy to find; no thump as it engages and easy shifting up and down the ratios. In fact, you can use ►



↑ Looks more like a Gatling gun than an exhaust!



↑ Dash is modern, compact and comprehensive in its displays



“Learners will find the throttle smooth and predictable, which makes slow-speed manoeuvres easy”



■ Slim centreline makes it an unintimidating mount for beginners



↑ Comfort oozes from this plush perch



↑ Helmet locks are always handy



↑ Very smart-looking accessory panniers

it much like a sports bike, shifting quickly through the ratios. That's handy as the throttle seems a bit short.

Kawasaki Australia spokesman Milo Dokmanovic confirms the throttle has a restrictor to comply with LAMS output rules. Although Kawasaki doesn't recommend de-restricting or altering the Vulcan S from factory specs, you should be able to derestrict it after you graduate to your open licence.

However, it's a bit short in the final drive and tingles through the bars, seat and pegs on the highway. On several occasions I've gone for a seventh gear. Conversely, I also pulled up at the traffic lights with one or two gears still remaining to click down. I took off on several occasions in second, but it isn't a real problem as it's got enough torque and a big flywheel mass so it didn't stall. Besides, you quickly get used to the shortness of the gears and if you want, you could change a sprocket for taller gearing. But that's not something Kawasaki recommends.

“We do sell genuine sprockets for this model, however only in the size that the model comes with as standard. There may be

aftermarket sprockets available, but as the manufacturer we do not recommend altering our motorcycles from factory specifications,” Milo says.

The Vulcan S gets along with a sense of urgency when you spin it up, but you'll have to work the gears to achieve the best results. Overtaking duties require dropping a cog or two. Hustling it through a set of tight corners isn't so much of a chore as the mid-gears are fairly similar and you can just keep it in third or even fourth.

The 14-litre fuel tank might seem on the small side, but with economy of better than 5L/100km, it's enough for day trips. It may only pose some concerns when touring or two-up.

Learners will find the throttle smooth and predictable, which makes slow-speed manoeuvres easy. And thanks to its low weight, it's very flickable around town. It changes direction easily and is capable of masterful feet-up U-turns.

However, the turning circle isn't great. The standard bars hit the tank, so you will need to do a three-point turn in suburban streets. Perhaps the shorter-reach bars allow more

turn. Surprisingly for a bike so light and nimble, it felt rock-solid on the highway thanks to the generous wheelbase. It wasn't even perturbed by wind blasts from passing trucks. The bars are wide, but not so wide you can't filter and they allow the rider to help stabilise the bike at speed.

In the twisty stuff, the Vulcan S again surprises with a reasonable lean angle. Learners may never get their pegs to scrape. You don't need to lean the bike a great deal to corner anyway as the Dunlop Sportmax radial tyres aren't too wide. The tyres are evenly matched in measurements so the bike neither flops into corners, nor wants to stand up. The chunky 18-inch front tyre doesn't track on grooved surfaces and it provides plenty of confidence when you chuck it into a corner.

Ride is plush and the adjustable pre-load on the rear shock should suit most weights of rider. It feels slightly under-damped and when you hit some lethal bumps the back end pogs a little. The front end remains fairly planted thanks to well-damped conventional forks.

There is a large 300mm disc at the front, which is all you really need for prompt



QUICKSPECS

Model: Kawasaki Vulcan S ABS

Price: \$9990 (+ORC)

Colours: Pearl Crystal White or Metallic Royal Purple

Warranty: 24 months, unlimited km

Service intervals: 6000km

Engine: Liquid-cooled, 4-stroke, parallel twin

Bore x Stroke: 83 x 60mm

Displacement: 649cc

Compression: 10.8:1

Power: 35kW @ 6600rpm

Torque: 53Nm @ 5600rpm

Transmission: 6-speed, chain drive

Frame: High-tensile steel double pipe perimeter frame

Dimensions: Seat height 705mm, weight 226kg (wet), fuel capacity 14 litres, wheelbase 1575mm, rake 31°, trail 180mm
Suspension: Front, 41mm telescopic forks, 130mm travel. Rear, offset laydown single-shock, linkage-equipped, with adjustable preload, 80mm travel

Brakes: Front, 300mm disc with dual piston caliper. Rear, 250mm disc with single-piston caliper. ABS.

Tyres: 120/70R 18M/C 59H; 160/60R 17M/C 69H

Fuel consumption: 4.9 l/100km

Theoretical range: 285km

Verdict: An ideal novice bike that will stay with you as you graduate

emergency stops on this lightweight bike. The rear brake is soft and wooden, but fine for steadying the ship and trailing brakes through a corner. The ABS comes on smoothly and efficiently.

The instruments are mounted high on the triple clamp so they are easy to see without looking down. They are a combination of analogue rev counter, and digital speedo and comprehensive rider information.

In fact, the array of information available on the LED-backlit LCD screen is excellent for a novice bike. There's an odometer, two tripmeters, clock, fuel gauge, fuel range, average and instant fuel economy. There's also an Economical Riding Indicator to help you get the most out of a tank of juice. At night the instruments glow with the blue LED backlight and are very readable, while the headlight provides an even spread of light.

It seems like the perfect choice for so many riders, not just novices. And with a healthy list of factory accessories and the ability to derestrict and tailor the rider ergonomics, this bike will last owners long past their graduation day to an open licence. **ARR**



“It seems like the perfect choice for so many riders, not just novices”



■ "I'll stick with the bike," she said. "It's more reliable."

THE LONG LIST

We're just short of 9000km on the BMW R1200RT's odometer now and this month's distances, under new conditions, revealed another side of the twin cylinder tourer

The last time I rode any great distance on the R1200RT with a pillion was on the launch last year, when Anne joined me for an overnighter in Victoria. It was cool and rainy, and the panniers and top box were empty. This time, we loaded it up to gunwales and went touring. We spent five days on the road and it was sometimes warm, sometimes very cold and always dry. The speeds were higher, the roads more challenging and the load significant. It's the toughest task I've thrown at the BMW to date.

Some of you have given me stick for the mountains of bags bolted all over the BMW, and I've only made things worse by adding the tank bag, but after this week I stand by

my choice! By the time we'd loaded up, the entire top box was filled with camera gear, laptop and a ridiculous number of chargers. Anne had one pannier, I had the other, and the puncture repair kit and mini compressor squeezed in too. I had to ask if three hair brushes were really necessary but apparently they were and somehow the generous panniers accommodated it all. That left the tank bag for odds and sods. We still had just enough space to stuff in unwanted jumpers and jacket liners. Oh, and I strapped the bulky tripod onto the side ... wrapped in a pink towel that I grabbed without thinking about the aesthetics of it. That got more than a few quizzical looks.

I don't know what the overall load, including us, weighed, but I'm guessing it'd be



■ Two, in a tango on a winding road and enjoying every bit of it

"That all amounts to another big tick the R1200RT. A happy pillion and a happy rider ... at the same time."

somewhere around 160kg. That's well short of the rated maximum payload of 221kg, which is an impressive amount. I don't think I'll ever get to the limit. All the same, our 160kg added almost 60 per cent to the bike's own ready-to-ride mass of 274kg. For the first time since I've had it, the BMW felt like a big touring bike. I'm sure it didn't help that all the weight of cameras and computer was up high in the top box, but that was a compromise I was willing to make in return for the convenience of quick and easy access.

That reminds me: I love the remote central locking. I've had stuff stolen from a pannier once before, back when the panniers on a K-series had two latches. I'd been slack and locked just one of them, and the thief got his hand in by levering the lid open at the unlocked end. Not only is there just one lock

per bag now, but I've got no excuse for failing to secure all at once by simply pressing the button on the fob. Thousands of dollars worth of luggage is protected in an instant.

Anyway, we set off with the suspension dialled to two-up — I could feel the rear end rise as the preload was wound on underneath me. At the first fuel stop I upped the front tyre pressure a couple of pounds to lighten the steering. The bike felt balanced, stable and glued to the road despite the weight, and it was lovely through sweeping corners. But when we hit the tight bends of the Oxley Highway it was definitely more of a handful than when solo. Still fast enough to test Anne's tolerance of her husband's exuberance, and never difficult to punt accurately and safely, but I could feel the weight on the brakes

and when flicking it around.

We were both impressed with the aerodynamics. Anne was in smooth air, just like me, and could sit in relaxed comfort. The ride quality was brilliant under the heavy load, and I left the damping rates on "normal" most of the time, only increasing them when we were hitting corners hard. Using the Dynamic engine mode made the experience a little harsher on Anne, but I was content with Road mode anyway. When Anne needed them, the big grab handles were ideal.

On roads with higher 110km/h speed limits, Anne had no complaints about the faster pace. The R1200RT has the power, ride quality, stability and aerodynamic comfort to be a good open-limit tourer in the Northern Territory, where I reckon about 160km/h two-up would be its happy mile-eating pace.

There wasn't any appreciable reduction in fuel economy under the BMW's load. I couldn't tell you how much the increased consumption was down to the sporty riding or the two-up loading, but on the Oxley we used about a litre more per 100km. Regular touring increased it by only about 0.3L/100km, and the bike's range was still generally over 400km per tank.

That all amounts to another big tick for the R1200RT. A happy pillion and a happy rider ... at the same time. If the BMW finally felt like a big touring bike, it was only in the tight stuff. Overall, though, it was as competent, adaptable and easy as ever.

Oh yeah, one more thing. A good fairing and a heated seat make all the difference in the world to your pillion on a frosty morning.

— MICK MATHESON



■ Yep, it was a chilly day but heated seats and grips made it bearable

LATIN LOVING

MOTO GUZZI V7 II

We've just taken delivery of a Moto Guzzi V7 II for a long-term test, and this one's going to be a lot of fun. Nigel Crowley will not just be putting it to the test as a commuter in Sydney's cut-and-thrust traffic, he'll be making constant changes to the little retro-bike. There's so much you can do to customise these machines that we're going to try to do it all.

This means rolling through the various custom kits Moto Guzzi produces for the V7 II: Scrambler, Racer and more. Nigel's almost frothing about it all because not only does he reckon the Guzzi is a sweetie, he is hanging out to see what each incarnation is like.

We'll outline more of the plan next issue, as well as give you our first impressions of life with the V7.



↑ There'll be lots to do on the V7!

METTLE & MAGIC

This 6951km, 12-day trip to Australia's centre and back sure threw up its share of challenges, but it was worth it

STORY AND PHOTOS: PAUL TAYLOR

It's 10.30am on a Thursday morning in mid-April, and I'm stranded on the side of the Oodnadatta Track in outback South Australia. Pick a compass point and the horizon bleeds out into scrub and red dirt, the wide, graded road a 620km stretch winding its way from Marree in the south-east to Marla in the north. Right now, I'm preparing to spend a long day in the sun with my crippled V-Strom, some stray cows and a dozen flies for company.

I'm stranded because I've just utterly shredded my rear tyre, a near-new Heidenau K60 Scout that's barely a week old. The sidewalls have a large, crooked smile etched into both sides, as though someone's grabbed two steak knives and tried to scalp the tread. My riding partner Mike's taken off on his DL650 to find someone who can tow me out of this mess, leaving me behind with all my camping gear, three litres of

water, a few muesli bars and zero phone reception. All that's rattling round my head is "what the hell have I gotten myself into?"

Our itinerary was a 12-day belter. We'd start in Sydney's inner west and finish at Uluru. On the way we'd pass through Hay, Port Augusta, then wind north through the Flinders Ranges, past Wilpena Pound, Oodnadatta and a side trip to Lake Eyre, then on to Uluru itself before cruising back home via Coober Pedy, Broken Hill and Dubbo, a lop-sided figure of eight when looking at the map. Two of Mike's work colleagues from eastern Victoria, Simon and Chris, said they'd join us in Port Augusta and travel north for a few days. Four people seemed like a good number to have.

Plans have a habit of going astray, and I was looking forward to that — not *wanting* anything to go wrong, but what's adventure without surprise? Sydney to Hay was a ►



↑ Looking back along the flat, featureless road towards Quorn



■ The start of the Oodnadatta track



■ Lake Eyre, with only salt on the horizon

slog on the bitumen, a cold and windy 700km trek across the state. As we pulled into the campground, Simon and Chris met us at the gate with refreshments in hand — a surprise that quickly turned into a life-affirming moment. While they'd made good time from

Bairnsdale, a side trip to Wilcannia led to disaster. Turns out that area is riddled with emus, and Chris collected one while cruising at a steady 100km/h. Miraculously he kept the bike upright and walked away unharmed, though the body of the bird struck his bike just below his windshield, and both the emu and his front plastics disintegrated on impact. All that was left in one piece apart from the handlebar, suspension and wheel was his left indicator. Day one, and their trip was over before it really began.

Mike and I packed up the following morning and belted through 800km to reach Port Augusta as the sun hovered on the horizon, battling wind and rain and some serious stretches of nothing. The crosswinds were ferocious, and even when the road did bend, the wind kept battering us from the same side — we were going straight ahead but leaning the bikes over by about five degrees to compensate. Not fun.

Day three picked up, and as we cut through the Flinders Ranges that morning, both the weather and landscape transformed. Dramatic twists and crests bisected pristine national park, and it was a joy to finally hit some curves in the sunshine and engage in more enthusiastic riding. Wilpena Pound, a ring of peaks covering 50 hectares in the national park, was a must-see, though we had to choose between going for a walk along the track or

making it to William Creek before sundown. We decided to push on.

The Ranges gave way to low-lying bush and collapsed sandstone houses that sat alone between thousands more acres of seemingly empty land. Time was against us and my bike was thirstier than Mike's, the fuel gauge screaming when I'd hit 360km while his would push on up to 420km. Bowsers in that part of the state were few and far between.

As soon as we hit the Oodnadatta Track at Marree, we knew we weren't going to make it to William Creek before dusk. We'd cautiously but sensibly decided to not ride in the dark when we were out of towns, as kangaroos would be on the move. I dreaded only seeing one as it flicked across my headlights. Plus, the Oodnadatta Track itself was brutal. At 60km/h it was rattling my bones, so I upped my speed to 90km/h, the front end gliding over the surface rather than striking every single rut, revs low in fifth gear, my grip loose and the throttle steady in case I clipped a wash of loose rocks.

William Creek was another 80 clicks away as the sun disappeared. We pushed on, and out of nowhere found Coward Springs campground. This was going to be it and it turned out to be a popular place to stop, thanks to good amenities and a natural spring that was just the ticket for washing off the day's grime.

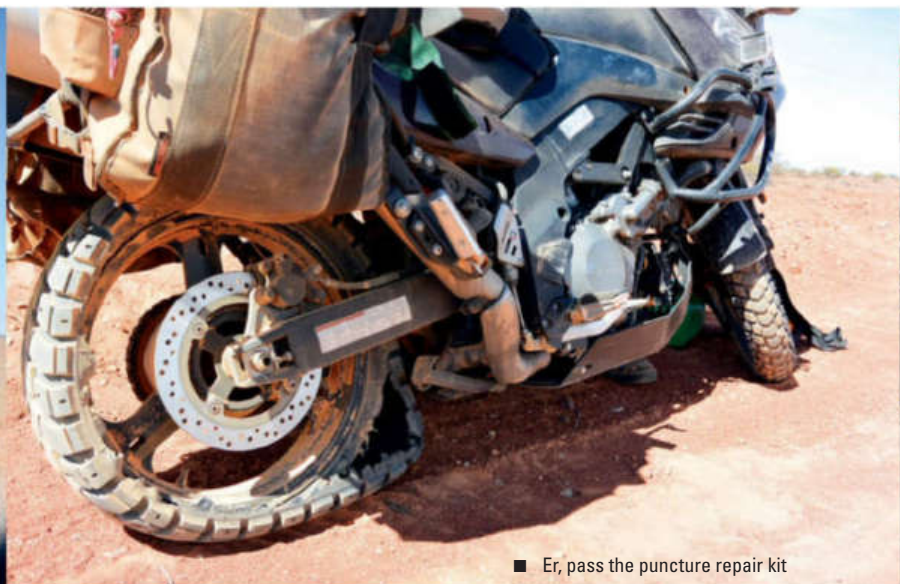
Day four and Lake Eyre was on our hit list. ►



↑ The Outback Highway, south of Marree, and a wonderfully out-of-place statue

■ Lake Eyre





■ Er, pass the puncture repair kit

After refuelling in William Creek, we doubled back and turned onto the Lake Eyre track, paid our \$10 entry fee to the national park at the unmanned shelter, and laughed at the sign that warned it was for four-wheel drives only. Hubris got us both — I fell off in sand when I was spooked by a cow that lazily galloped out of my way, and Mike blew a fork seal after he struck a deep hole full of dust. Still, the sight of the huge, crystallised salt lake that could gobble Cyprus was our reward.

All we could do was keep an eye on the leak, and it held firm as we put another 200 kays of dirt behind us when we pulled into Oodnadatta that afternoon. Crucially, no oil was dribbling onto the disc or pads — we figured we could push on to Marla (another 200 kays on rock-strewn corrugations) and sort it out before reaching Uluru.

Day five started gloriously. We set off early to reach the campground at Uluru by dusk, a fierce 730km away, 200 of which were still on the Oodnadatta track. So we hit it. My confidence was high, the bikes were purring and the sky was glorious. And then challenge bit me on the arse.

I came into the long, sweeping left hander with a smile, but as I straightened up the bike kept going sideways, the back end refusing to cooperate. I pulled over and saw the slices in the side of the tyre — I still don't know how I did it. We were literally in the middle of nowhere and all we could do was ride on.

So that's what I did for four kays until the tyre tore itself to bits. Marla was still another 60km away and as we were figuring out what to do, a car pulled up and the driver told us about a station up the road and how we might have some luck there.

Mike left, and I sat in the sun.

Tent up, book out, and I took stock of where I was and what it would be like to be here for a day, maybe a night. I had everything I needed to keep me fed and hydrated, and while it wouldn't be pleasant I was going to be okay. I

“The crosswinds were ferocious and even when the road did bend, the wind kept battering us from the same side — we were going straight ahead but leaning the bikes over by about five degrees to compensate”



■ And, rescued!

stood for a moment, and slowly gazed at the nothing. On average, less than 12mm of rain falls here in the month of April, but life still persists.

I'd just got myself properly set up an hour after I'd said “see you later” to Mike when a ute pulled up — with Mike in the passenger seat. By chance, the owner, Daniel, was coming down his driveway as Mike was coming up it and quickly hitched up his trailer. Chance wasn't done yet. Back at the station, one of Daniel's co-workers dug a wrecked VTR out of a shed and by sheer, stupid luck the rear tyre was an exact fit. By 2pm I had a Michelin with

decent tread on in place of the Heidenau, and we were off. Daniel wouldn't take any money for his heroics but agreed on a couple of cases of beer. By 3.15pm I'd left two slabs behind the bar at Marla in his name.

Our plans had to change. While the Michelin was a ripper, Mike's seal was getting worse and his rear tyre had sprung a slow leak. The best place to get both fixed was Alice Springs — 450km away — as Marla only held a servo, pub and roadhouse in the one building. Although the speed limit on the Stuart Highway was 130km/h, it was going to be a rush to get to the city before nightfall. About 100km from



■ The new tyre



■ The Breakaways in the distance

■ Uluru, the iconic rock



Alice Springs we tucked in behind a road train and used it as a plough, knowing that it'd fare better than us if any wildlife strayed across the road. At 8pm we'd found a hotel, a pub, and finally exhaled after a 13-hour day on dirt and tar.

Cut forward 24 hours and 360km, and we were at Curtin Springs Cattle Station, a free campsite on another working station covering a million acres, and a measly 100km from the glorious monolith. While the Uluru grounds were going to be convenient, Curtin Springs was a winner thanks to free camping and great food, plus the station's two very passionate

owners who were happy to share stories about their life on the land.

Then, the next morning, our pinnacle, the result of months of planning — Uluru. You could fill a whole magazine with how special Uluru and nearby Kata Tjuta (aka The Olgas) are. There's a feeling to the land that you have to experience to understand, and as we walked around the base, we took in what we'd accomplished so far, the challenges we'd faced with another five days ahead of us.

The run from Curtin Springs to Coober Pedy was a beastly 650km on bitumen from start to finish. It was emu and roo country here and

we were constantly scanning the road side for anything that was going to run or hop out in front of us. We had two nights here, this time in an underground hotel on something soft.

A hot tip from a fellow traveller led us to the Breakaways, a leisurely but stunning ride out to a geological site that's featured in a few iconic Australian movies, and to Crocodile Harry's, the "original" Crocodile Dundee. Harry was a Latvian who wrestled crocs in the NT and made his way to Coober Pedy in the mid-'70s. Although Harry died in 2006, the legend remains and his home — like a good number of other homes and businesses — is a converted ►



■ Uluru, the turn-around point



■ A typical morning at camp



■ Coober Pedy, where you can find movie props littered across the streets

opal mine. Pay him a visit because the man led nothing short of a wild life.

Day 10 and we were hitting the road to go back home, though as we grabbed some breakfast, the owner of the hotel asked if we wanted to look at the old mines that he'd been exploring in his patch of land since he moved there 20 years ago. What started as a "five minutes, tops" walk turned into an hour-long tour through the mine, snaking under and around the existing rooms and getting a quick history lesson of the land — far too good an

opportunity to pass up.

The sun evaporated before we could reach Broken Hill, forcing us to stop in Yunta, a blink-and-you'll-miss-it outpost on the Barrier Highway, after clocking up another 755km. We then rode in what felt like a straight line for 780 clicks to Nyngan the following day. Herds of wild goats were scattered all over the road — I lost count after the first 200.

It wasn't until the middle of our final day in central west NSW, through picturesque Orange and then the mountains between Bathurst

and Katoomba, where we found curves and elevation again, and coming into more built-up areas meant no more roos but plenty of cars. We had our final petrol stop in Lithgow, and I thought for half a second about coming home via Bells. I was kidding myself.

While I'd brought and religiously used a can of lube, my chain was utterly shot, clattering against the swingarm. The air filter was choked. Everything was caked with dust. Then it started to rain just past Katoomba, the first time since we'd initially passed through Port ►

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■ Crocodile Harry's, from the outside. Inside isn't suitable for this family-friendly mag



■ The magnificent Breakaways



“While I’d brought and religiously used a can of lube, my chain was utterly shot, clattering against the swingarm. The air filter was choked. Everything was caked with dust. Then it started to rain”

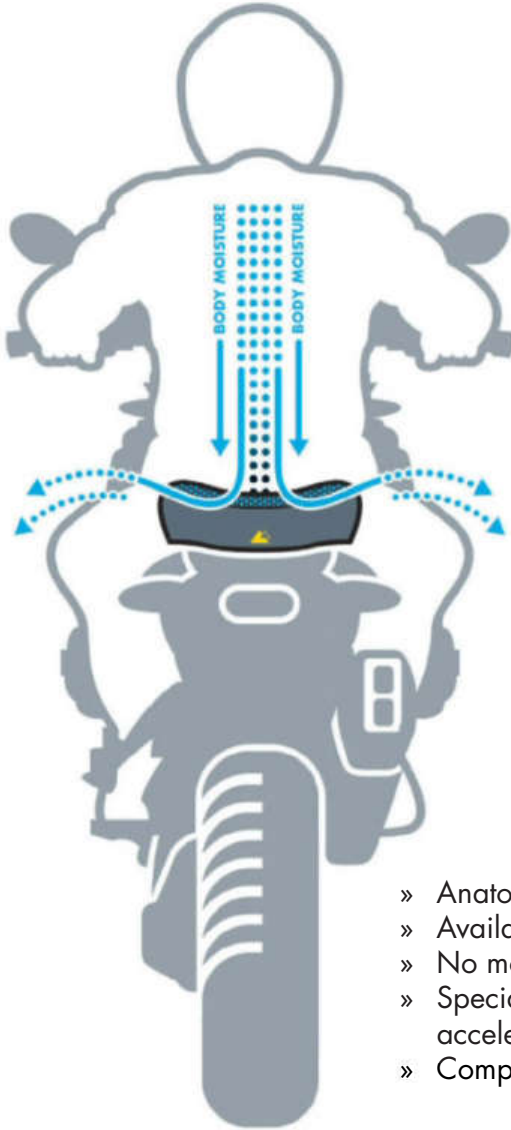
Augusta 10 days ago. Big, fat drops weaved through the mesh on my jacket and the traffic was stalled along the M4. Our final 40km was a drenching, second-gear crawl back home. No surprises there.

All up, we covered 6951km in 12 days. I was down a tyre, soaked through, but ecstatic. What began as a trip to see the country with a mate has changed me. We all know we live in a beautiful land but actually seeing it, touching and living in it, that romantic, unforgiving outback, shook me to my core. What had I gotten myself into? I’m still trying to work that out. **ARR**



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Cobblestones, ski jumps and cuckoo clocks are all part and parcel of a ride through the Schwarzwald, better known as the Black Forest







↑ The beautiful countryside in Bavaria

STORY AND PHOTOS: PETER WHITTEN

Riding a foreign bike, on foreign roads and in a foreign country is never the easiest task for a rider. So I took the easy way out and jumped on the back.

We were in Germany along with 70 other Touratech distributors from 34 countries. Our three-day conference was “interrupted” by a magnificent ride through the famed Black Forest.

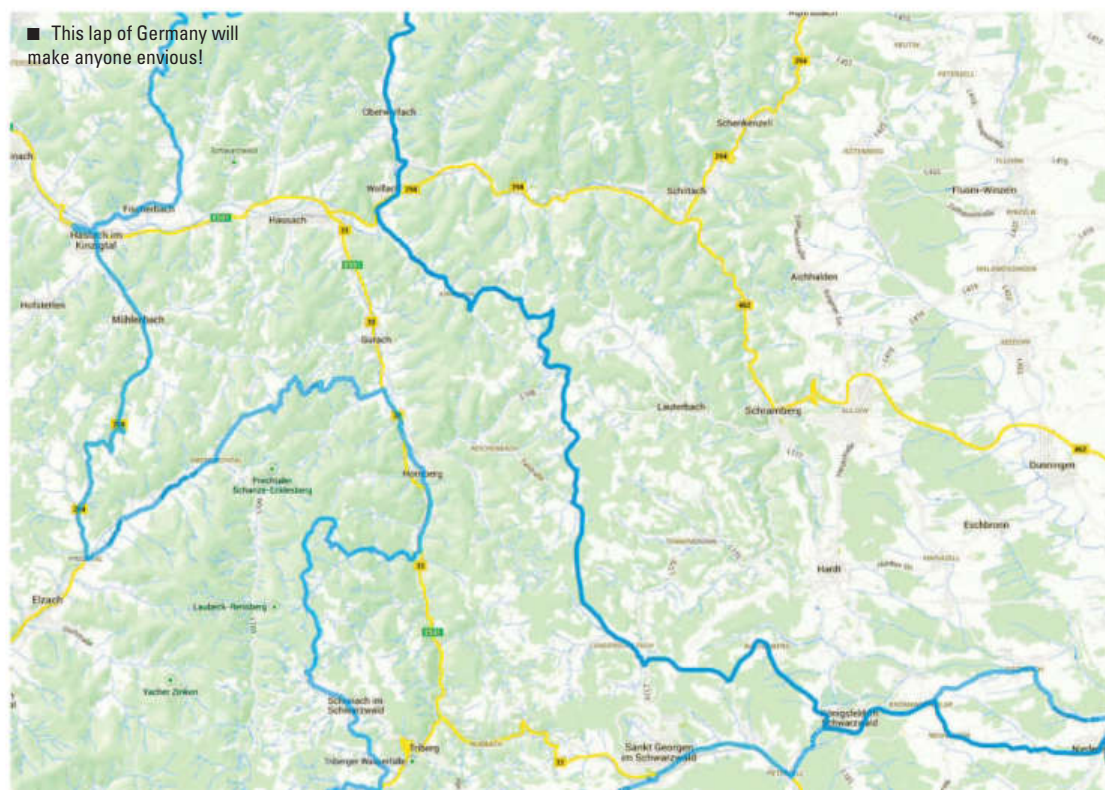
I was keen to sit on the back of the bike and take in the sights of a new country as this was my first time in Germany. The scene at Touratech headquarters in Nierdeschach on a chilly morning was one of excitement and anticipation. Riders were in groups and allocated a Touratech-supplied bike, with a team leader, or guide, to lead us over the picturesque tarmac route to the north-west of Touratech HQ.

Robin was given a big KTM 990 Adventure that was fully kitted out with Touratech panniers and a top case that proved perfect for a pillion passenger to lean against. It also meant that I could take photos along the way.

Once underway, it quickly became evident that this was a special part of the world. The scenery was breathtaking

as we made our way up narrow country lanes that carried little traffic and took us deep into the Black Forest. The morning chill soon gave way to warm early-autumn sunshine and it wasn't long before the joy of adventure motorcycle riding became truly evident.

With nothing but a helmet between you and the elements, your senses pick up things that they wouldn't if you were sitting behind a windscreen of a car. Every change in temperature is magnified and the smells from farms, vehicles and forests attack your senses in a way that's hard to comprehend ►





↑ Rolling along the cobblestone streets into town

The morning chill soon gave way to warm early-autumn sunshine and it wasn't long before the joy of adventure motorcycle riding became truly evident



■ Wouldn't want to cut the corner too tight here!



■ Into another beautiful German village



■ Like kids in a lolly shop, it was Touratech HQ time!

“There seemed to be a postcard setting around every corner”

for non-riders.

While this was my first ride through Germany, Robin had done a few, yet he reckoned this was easily the best Touratech ride he'd done. And it wasn't hard to see why. We made our way through the villages

of Konigsfeld, Wolfach, Oberwolfach, Fischerbach, Haslach im Kinzigtal, Hornberg and Schwarzwald. Their names meant nothing to me, but the locations were so special that I longed to return to take a closer look.

We rode through streets made of cobblestones and under archways that had long-ago dates such as 1084 inscribed on them. We passed through tunnels kilometres in length, along crystal-blue streams running through villages. Deep in the Black Forest we saw many beautifully prepared

Renault R5 Turbos on a Saturday morning drive and dozens of motorcycles making the most of the perfect weather.

Like you often see with bus drivers, motorcyclists have an unwritten kinship demonstrated by giving each other a casual wave as you pass by. It's an acknowledgment that you appreciate their similar hobby (or obsession), but also acts as an “I've got your back” kind of sign just in case something goes wrong. It's a reassuring thought. ►

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BLACK FOREST, GERMANY

■ An impressive display of flower boxes



“we continued to pass incredible architecture and houses brimming with flower boxes on every window ledge. There seemed to be a postcard setting around every corner.”

Heading further into our ride, we continued to pass incredible architecture and houses brimming with flower boxes on every window ledge. There seemed to be a postcard setting around every corner. We passed through Schonach, a hive of activity during the snow season. I saw my first

ever ski jump towering above the pine trees, almost as high as the nearby electricity-producing windmill. It was quite a sight — as were the cross-country skiers practising their art on the snow-less tarmac roads.

Further on, we visited Schonwald im Schwarzwald ►

■ The windmill puts the ski jump into perspective!



■ Another Renault R5 Turbo



“The scenery was breathtaking as we made our way up narrow country lanes that carried little traffic and took us deep into the Black Forest”

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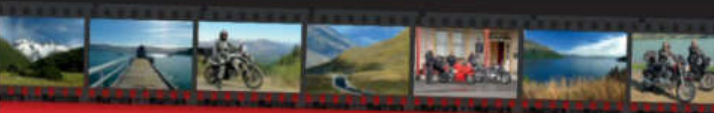
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BLACK FOREST, GERMANY



■ Robin and Peter itching to get on the bike and ride



■ A roadside village stream



■ The length of the tunnels in Europe will scare most Aussies! You think they never end

where, in 1737, the first cuckoo clocks were invented by Frank Ketterer. That was 43 years before Captain Cook clapped eyes on Australia!

I could have sat back and taken this in for hours, but all too soon the ride came to an end. After a couple of hours on the back of the KTM, my legs were numb and were reluctant to let me

stand, let alone walk.

Yet none of that mattered. The sights, sounds and smells of Bavaria will remain with me for years to come. They'll remind me of that day when adventure touring opened up a small part of the world that I'd never seen before. It had been a journey to remember, and I've got the photos to prove it. **ARR**

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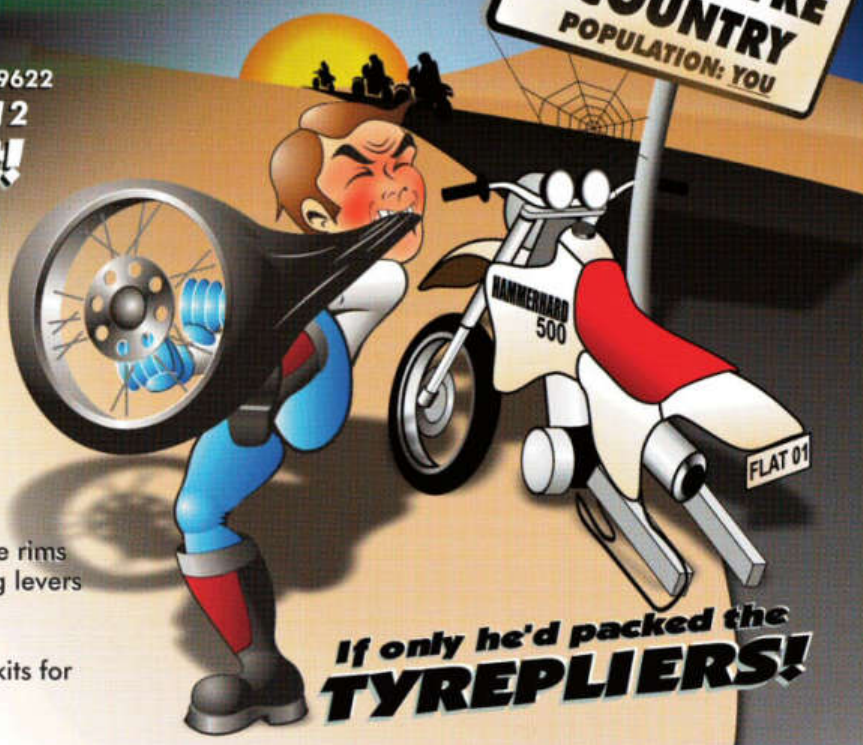
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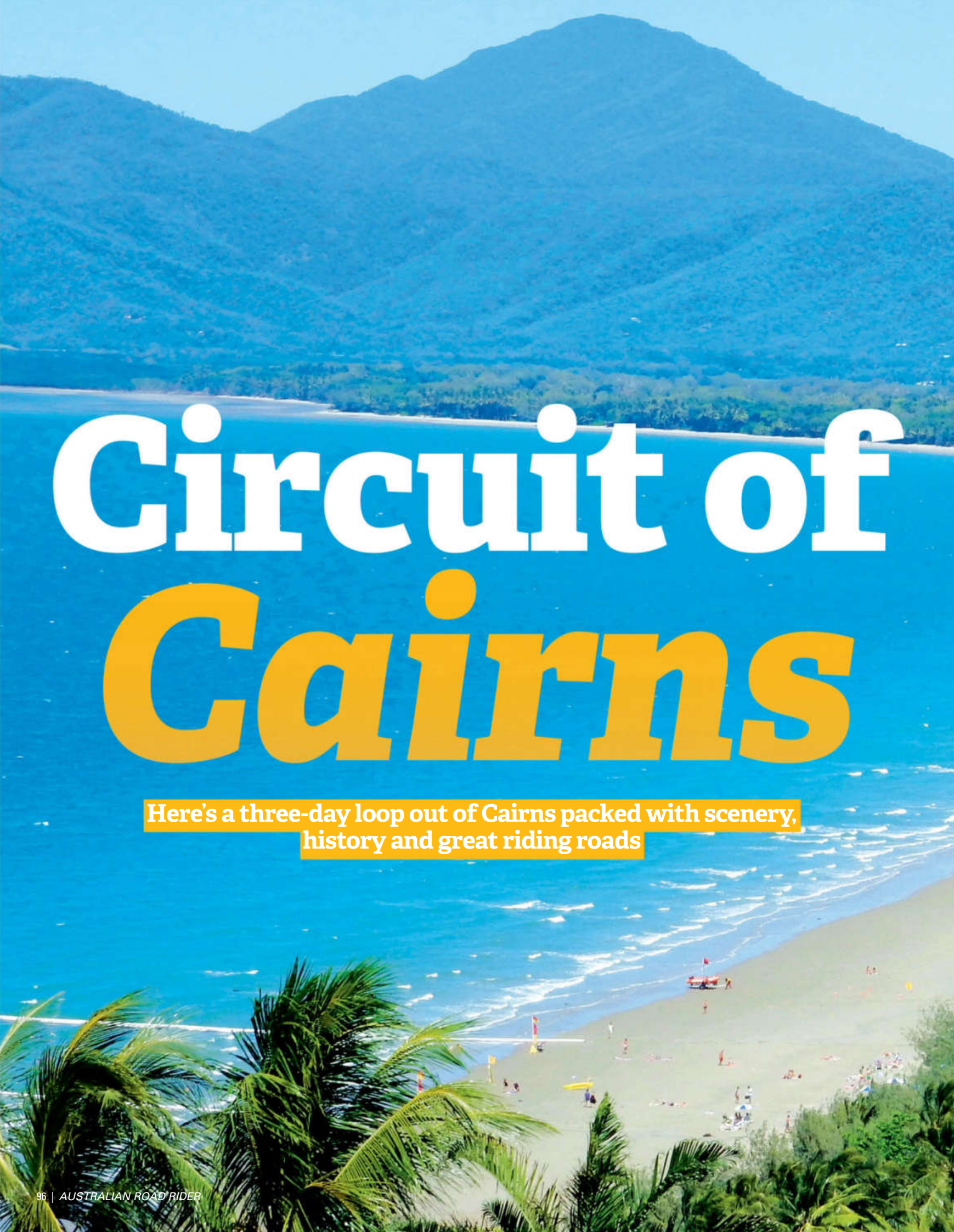
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■ All aboard at Atherton

STORY: BARBARA JONES
PHOTOS: MARK JONES

Cairns. Why would anyone want to be anywhere but here? You can come in on an international flight, you can ride here or ship your bike, or rent one. You can stay anywhere from a backpacker hostel to five-star luxury hotel. You can curl up with a morning coffee pool-side, or have a splash at the Cairns Lagoon. You can do swims, croc spotting (preferably not where you're swimming), hang gliding, and there are too many photo opportunities. Or just throw a leg over and get going.

In terms of distance (less than 100km), this first leg of the Cairns loop heads to Port Douglas and is really just over an hour's ride. Which you could do, but you shouldn't and you won't. Heading up the Kennedy Highway north towards Port Douglas, it only takes minutes to get through the residential bits for some eye-opening vistas of ocean views. It's incredible — you've been tootling along average highway, and then an awesome view of the Coral Sea. Gasp!

It's then into a canopy of mango trees to the Ellis Beach Bar and Grill on your left. You can't miss it. If you turn right, you're in the ocean. Ellis Beach does have a stinger net from November to May to protect from the deadly



■ Ellis Beach B&G is a great spot for brekkie, and lunch, and dinner ...



■ Everyone loves a croc farm!

box jellyfish that occasionally drift in. (If you do manage to make the wrong turn to the right, your riding gear will protect you, if not your bike.) But, turn left.

The Ellis Bar and Grill is a bit of an icon. It used to be a scungy place where you always wanted to be ready to get out, but it was a biker haven and still is, with lots of upgrades. There's live music, really good food, and it is still biker-friendly. This is a fantastic place to have a morning tea. It's also easy to be lulled into having lunch and then afternoon tea ...

The next cool stop is Hartley's Crocodile Farm, also on your left. It is well presented and gives boat-side tours of croc feedings. There's also an excellent display of koalas, cassowaries, snakes and birds in their natural ►



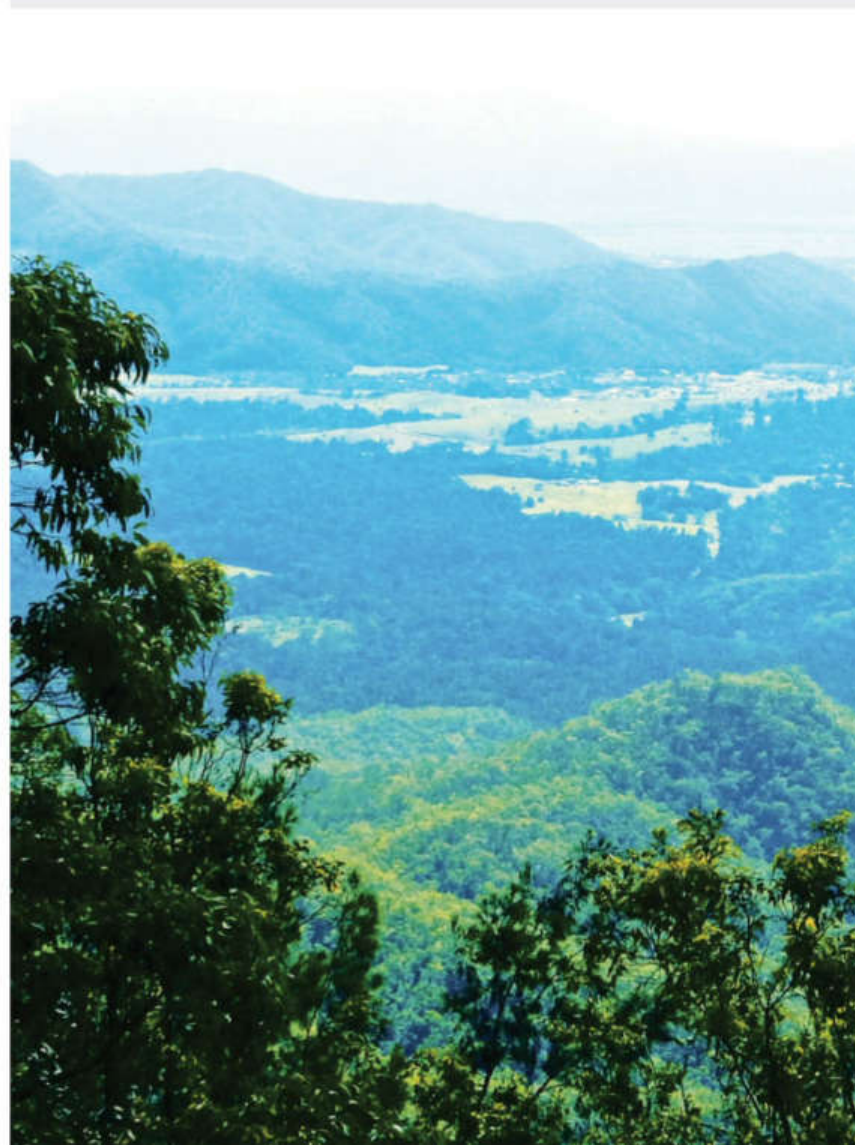
■ Elinjaa Falls are a must stop location

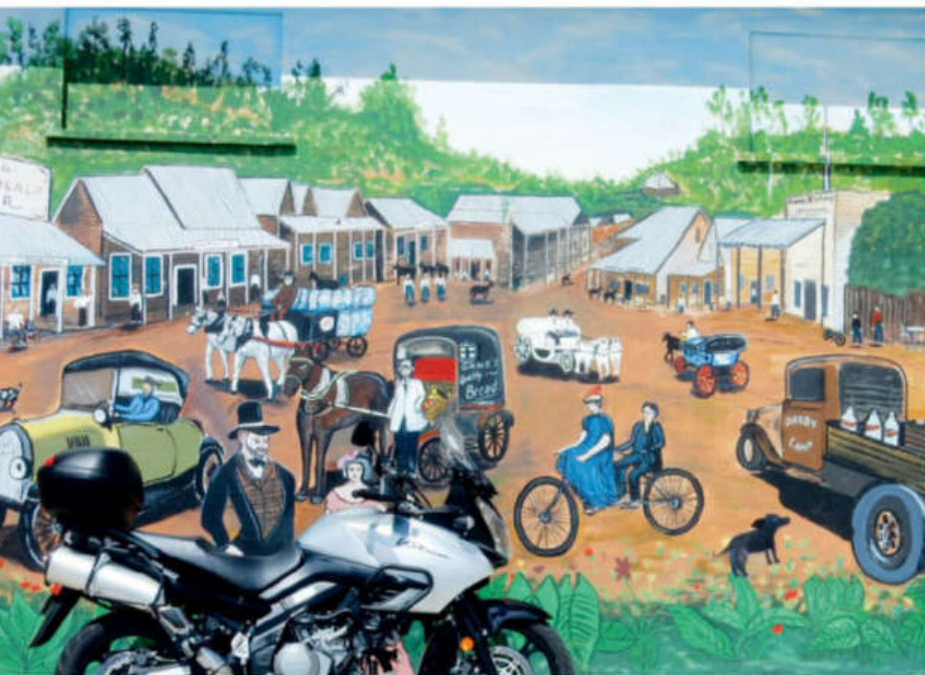
“This is a fantastic place to have a morning tea. It's also easy to be lulled into having lunch and then afternoon tea ...”

■ A beautiful Curtain Fig Tree



■ Goldsborough Valley





■ The Strom blends in to this Herberton Mural



■ Herberton Spy Camera Museum

habitats. They are kept separate for obvious management reasons.

The next stop on the road is the Rex Lookout. To your right there's a spot where you can either get great pictures of the coast, or book a hang glider flight to view the ocean.

From there ride to Port Douglas, turning right into town. From here you can go anywhere — to the famous Four Mile Beach or through the incredible little arty town. For lunch, take a few spins around the town to figure where is best. The marina is great for the views, but there are many amazing

places in town.

Depending on how many stops you make on the way up, Port Douglas may be a good choice not only for lunch, for a sleep too — and again, there are so many choices. You could even be tempted to stay an extra day and visit the Great Barrier Reef.

The next day's ride is a bigger one, from Port Douglas to Milla Milla. Prepare yourself for an incredible ride up the Rex Range towards the Atherton Tablelands. It is only about 10km to Route 44, then you are on your way to Mount Molloy, a historic mining and stock area with a

great bakery for morning tea.

The Rex Range was one of the early roads from the coast up to the lucrative mine fields. Primarily the miners were after gold, but nickel and tin were also in demand. The mine was cut through raw rainforest along steep mountainsides. The ride winds through the jungle along incredible twisting roads with steep inclines. Slow down to see the lookouts and make the most of the many photo opportunities. If need be, turn around and do it again — it's as much fun going down as it is up.

If you're not peckish, keep heading towards



■ Port Douglas Harbour is hard to leave!





■ Looking north up the coast



■ Pebble Beach

“It used to be a scungy place where you always wanted to be ready to get out, but it was a biker haven and still is, with lots of upgrades.”

the next town, Mareeba. It's about a 30-minute ride along fairly flat roads of cattle country. Keep an eye out here as the cows aren't always behind fences and, being cows, they have no sense of your greater inertia and momentum.

Mareeba was originally a tobacco-growing region, but has had to develop with the

changing market. Old farms are now planted to coffee beans, mangoes and other tropical fruits. There is also a great place for a morning tea if you haven't already stopped, at CoffeeWorks. It features coffees using locally grown beans and an extensive and somewhat eccentric art gallery. There are also boutique

wineries of local mango and exotic fruit wines.

Just past Mareeba on your right is the turn-off to the Mount Uncle Distillery, about 2.5km off the highway on Chewko Road. On beautiful landscaped grounds set amid acres of banana plantations and sugar cane fields there are tasting rooms for their liqueurs and spirits. Back to the highway and heading for Atherton, you once again hit lots of flat roads. It's a great spot to stretch out with a bit of speed to get to the next town of interest, Herberton.

This tiny town used to be the capital of the far north, catering to miners who were ►

■ Milla Milla lookout





■ More glorious scenery

“Heading up the Kennedy Highway north towards Port Douglas, it only takes minutes to get through the residential bits for some eye-opening vistas of ocean views. It’s incredible”

making it rich (or not). Hotels, bars and assay offices abounded. The gold ran out, then the tin. And now there’s one fairly decrepit hotel, but a few really neat little shops with one real stand-out — the Camera and Spy Museum. War time was big for this area and there are lots of sites along the way commemorating it. The owner, a talented photographer in his own right, has collected an amazing collection of photos and old state-of-the-art spy gear. If you ever watched *Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, it’s worth the entry fee.

The other major feature is the Herberton Historical Village. This is also an amazing and unexpected place, with a wild collection of the area’s past. Everything from blacksmiths to frock shops is covered in detail. It’s huge and can take well over a couple of hours to explore. You don’t have to be a history buff to appreciate it.

Back onto Route 52, travelling east to Route 1, it is about 2km to Ravenshoe. Before you embarrass yourself, it’s pronounced Ravensho, not “shoe”. It’s dairy farmland, high altitude, and they even get frost up there in winter. Don’t take the liners out of your jacket just yet. It has some neat little cafes and a good place for lunch before heading to Milla Milla along what is known as the Waterfalls Circuit.

Heading east on Route 1, the Kennedy Highway, for about 2km brings you to the Old Palmerston Road. Along here you will find the well-known Milla Milla Falls, which is a great place for a picnic. Want to strip down and stand under the falls? Go ahead. Do you have a thermal rescue blanket with you? Some of the other less-popular falls are ►

■ No matter what way you look along the coastline ...



■ ... the views are outstanding!





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▲ Rodeo drive-in. Nothing worth watching this night



■ Happy to be here, but not so happy to leave!



▲ A passer-by at Rex Lookout

the Platypus and Elingam. They are smaller, but far more private.

After thawing out, find a spot like the Milla Milla Hotel for a sleep — you are so going to need it! It's a good little place for a stay before you head down to Tarzali, home to the cool motorcycle restoration site, Tarzali Motorcycles, featured in issue #112. There's nothing new here past 1980!

Next it's on to Malanda, another dairy farming area. The central town also has a nice waterfall and swimming area. A walk to the visitors' centre takes in a jungle walk and you may even get a chance to see tree kangaroos.

This area was once violently volcanic, but you can now safely cruise in to Lake Barrine, Lake Eacham, and back onto Route 52 towards the artist's enclave town of Yungaburra. This region is good for lunch, which can be anything from traditional to quirky. Try the Lake Eacham Hotel, which is really smooth with its wooden, polished interior, or a quirky little cafe on the next corner where you'll be served by surprisingly abrupt and loud owners.

And that would be the short run down the Gillies Highway, down to Gordonvale and back up to Cairns. Save your camera battery — the Gillies offers some of the most incredible rides and views through to Mt Bartle Frere. Then it's back to base camp Cairns. **ARR**

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GREAT SOUTHERN LAND

While Goulburn and Canberra might carry a stigma they can't shake, there's no denying there are some great back roads and history to explore

STORY AND PHOTOS: BOB WOZGA

When you mention the Southern Tablelands to most people, they usually respond with a yawn and tell you with some authority that "it consists of Goulburn and Canberra. There is nothing to see or do there. That is why they built a bypass around both places so you can get to Melbourne quicker." As they continue talking, you realise they had either slept all the way from Sydney, were in some other comatose state while there, or they simply haven't been there.

It does appear people hop in their car, turn on the Navman and take the most direct route. This is invariably the most mind-numbing path, following expressways, bypassing towns ►

SOUTHERN TABLELANDS

and directing you to twin servos where you are guided to Maccas. It has its place but is a dead boring route. If you are able to obtain a map, an alternate route can be planned.

A comfortable day's ride during the warmer months is a trip to Captains Flat, located to the east of the ACT. Heading south from Sydney, you can race down the M5 until Campbelltown, where you veer off and travel through Camden, over Razorback and into Picton. The Old Hume Highway follows through to Mittagong and joins the expressway just south of Berrima. This way you can support the local economy by stopping for a coffee and pie in any of the local bakeries. As you near Goulburn, you bypass the bypass and head into town.

Goulburn still has the wide streets and architecture of a once major trading centre.

After the bypass was completed about 10 years ago, the town did suffer a slight decline in trade. A few of the smaller service stations and takeaway joints disappeared. But on the whole, it has survived and has grown. It still services smaller communities such as Crookwell, Taralga and Braidwood. Nearby Wakefield Park raceway is still a big drawcard and keeps the motels occupied.

Taking the Braidwood turnoff, passing the railway station and railyards, the traffic begins to thin out and houses give way to open fields of grazing sheep. The road is well kept and comfortable to cruise along for the next 40km until you get to Tarago. There's an intersection with a cricket pitch on one corner, a disused petrol bowser on another and statue of a dog in front of a pub on the third corner. For the Henry Lawson fans, this pub was named after

“Taking the Braidwood turnoff, passing the railway station and railyards, the traffic begins to thin out and houses give way to open fields of grazing sheep”

The Loaded Dog. Great story if you know it, great story to read if you don't know it. For crime buffs, it was also the meeting place of Ben Hall, Frank Gardiner and the Clarke Brothers, where they made plans to rob the gold shipment from the Majors Creek Mine in the late 1800s. For anyone else, the beer is cold, the chips are hot and the atmosphere good.

Heading toward the coast, somewhere inland and south of the headwaters of the Shoalhaven River, you ride through a time warp and arrive in Braidwood. The whole town is listed under the National Trust and historic buildings line the wide street. If it wasn't for the cars, you would swear you had stepped into the 1890s. It is worth taking some time to stretch the legs and have a look around. The town has interesting galleries, the coffee is hot and there is a bakery down the road that makes excellent pies. This is a main stopping point for people from Canberra heading to Batemans Bay so traffic increases through town during the holiday periods.

At the end of town, turn right at the service station and head towards Cooma. The road is in reasonable condition and the traffic is relatively light. At Ballalaba, a gravel road on the right rises into the hills to take you to Captains Flat. The gravel runs only for about ►

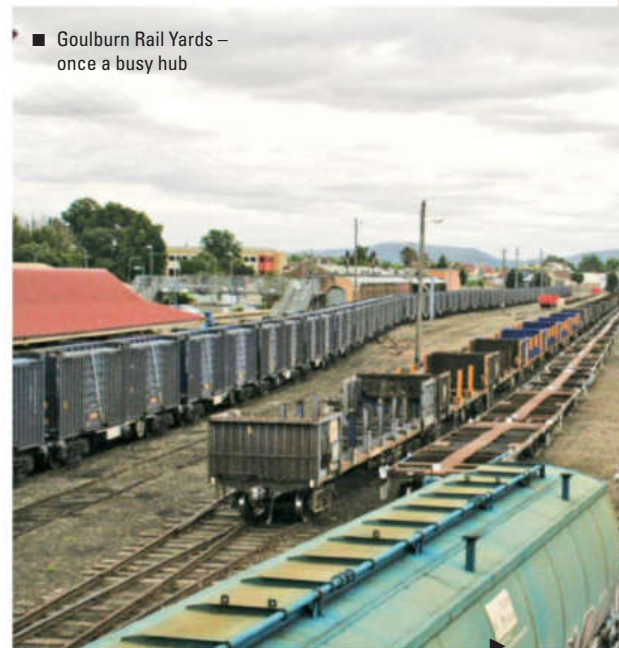
■ Goulburn Hotel – There's always a pub opposite a rail station



■ The Loaded Dog Hotel, Tarago – a welcome stopping point



■ Goulburn Rail Yards – once a busy hub



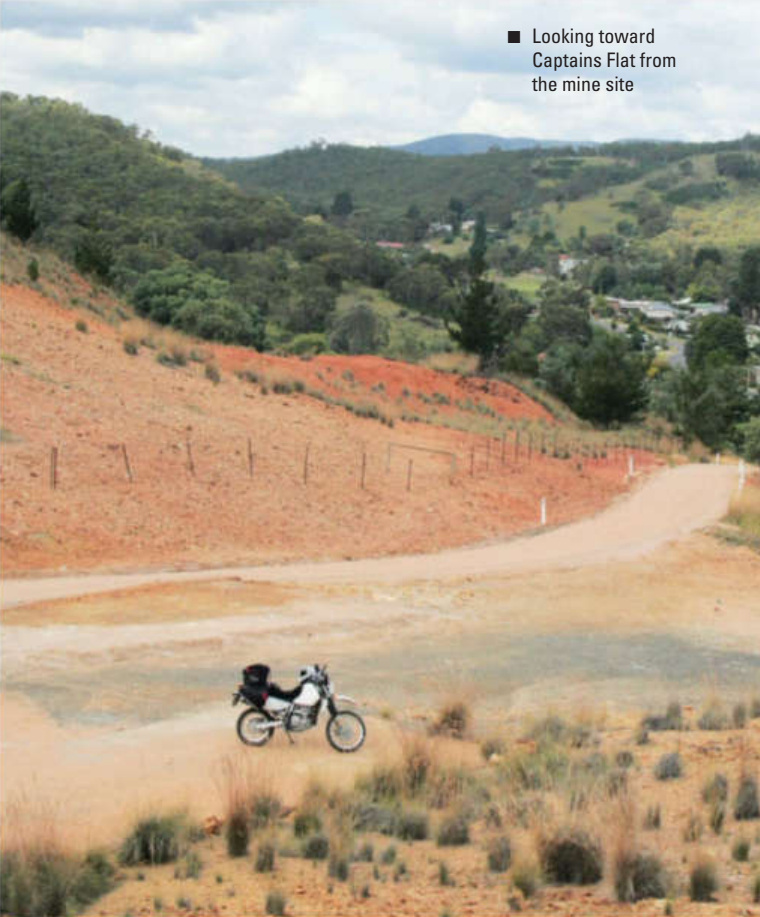
SOUTHERN TABLELANDS

■ Looking back toward Ballalaba



↑ Mural at the entrance of The Lake George mine keeping the history alive

■ Looking toward Captains Flat from the mine site



■ Braidwood Hotel – a step back in time

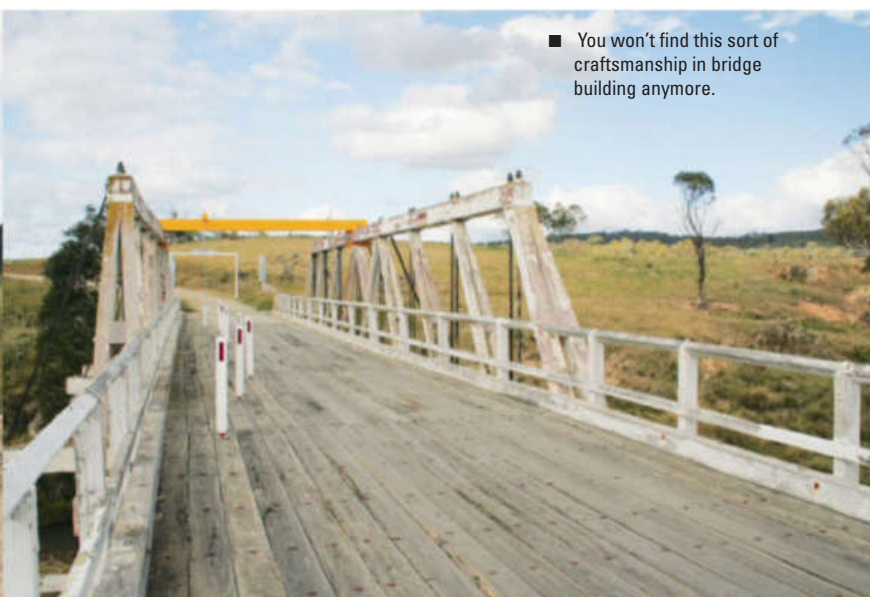




■ Stopping for a cup of tea beside an old bridge, Hoskinstown.



■ There is always something to find down an old path.



■ You won't find this sort of craftsmanship in bridge building anymore.

“The whole town is listed under the National Trust and historic buildings line the wide street. If it wasn't for the cars, you would swear you had stepped into the 1890s”

40km and traverses through open country and into forested areas where road kill needs to be dodged. As per normal in these areas, road signs are peppered with gunshots so it's best not to ride too late in the day just in case you get hit by a suicidal wallaby or anything else.

Closer to town the bitumen starts and winds down the hill into Captains Flat, named after a straying bullock called Captain that could always be found in this valley. The town was known for the Lake George Mine located on the outskirts producing gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper and iron pyrites. Closing in 1962, the mine site now has scattered ruins and a lookout built on the barren hilltop. A thoughtful artist has painted a mural on the mine's entrance. Depicting miners at the mouth of the shaft, it is a fitting tribute to the people that worked in this remote area.

Leaving town towards Queanbeyan, the road runs alongside an abandoned railway line that once carried the ore to be processed. A nondescript road sign points to a graded road leading to Hoskinstown and Bungendore. Along this road, the rail line crosses the

Molonglo River on a rusting steel bridge on concrete pylons while the road crosses an ageing single-lane wooden bridge. Paint peeling and timbers fading, the bridge sits as a reminder of busier times for the region. Part of the lane has been cordoned off where the bearers have been repaired and barriers have been placed to prevent heavy vehicles causing further damage.

Heading north takes you through Hoskinstown, Bungendore back to Tarago and into Goulburn, meeting the expressway that guides you back to Sydney. All up, this is a great day's ride and can easily be done with a group of friends or solo, taking in wonderful scenery, great little towns and a variety of road conditions.

There is an alternate route for the return journey from Goulburn if you have the time. Pass through Penrose Forest into Exeter, Bundanoon, spending a night in Moss Vale, Bowral or Mittagong before tackling the traffic back to Sydney.

I rode through Penrose Forest a while ago and came across a large hairy lady collecting



mushrooms between the pine trees. She made grunting noises while climbing over fallen logs. I put this down to her being a Latvian mushroom picker and gave no more thought to it until recently, when I came across an article on the net about Yowies being spotted in the forest. This got me thinking about the Latvian mushroom picker in the middle of the forest. Yowies are obviously good at disguises, otherwise they would have been found by now. Maybe there was more to the grunting hairy lady than meets the eye? I may need to do a follow-up trip through the forest soon to confirm my theory. **ARR**

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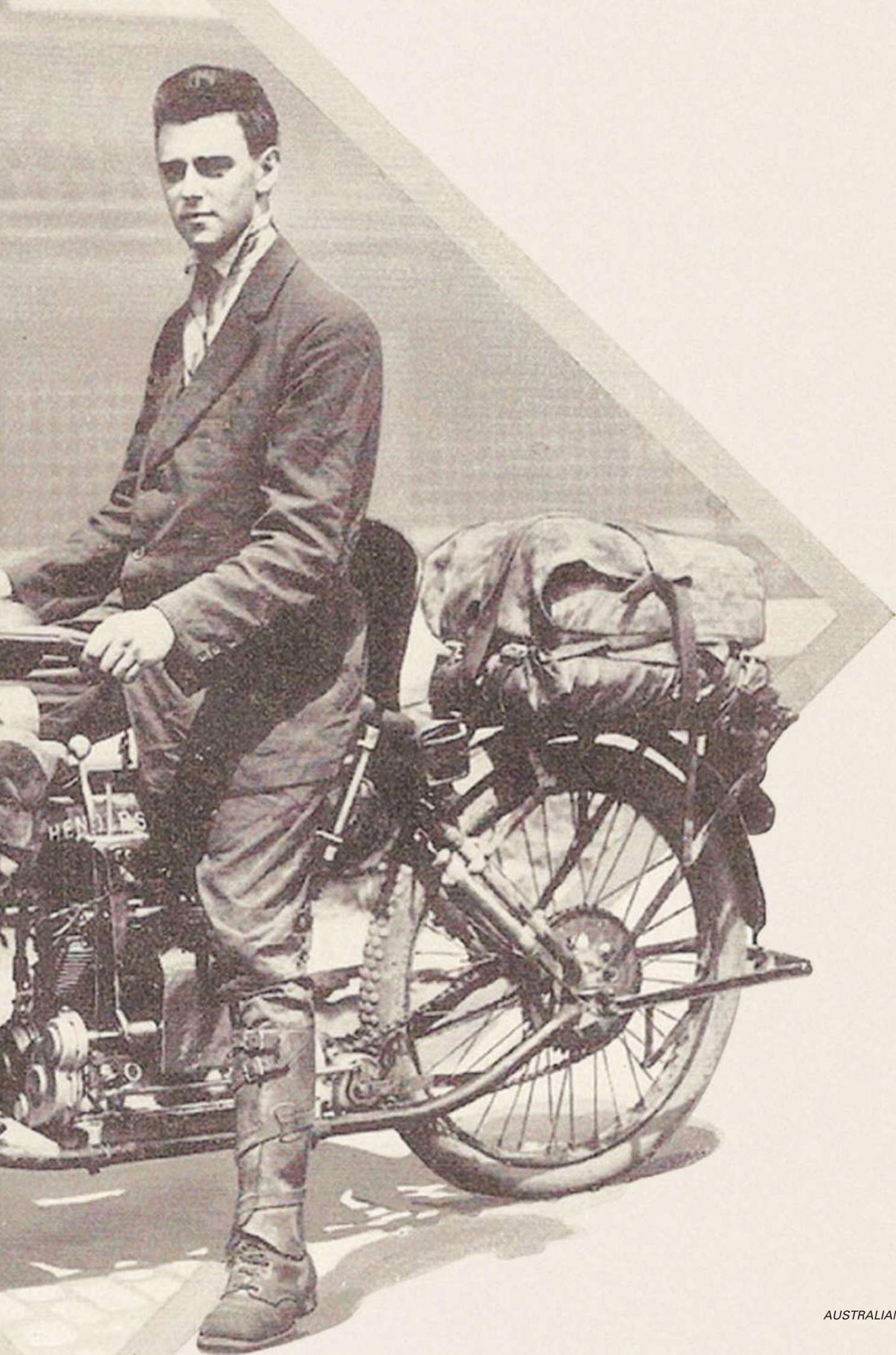
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Into the unknown

Part four of our Origins series discovers how adventure riding got to where it is today



■ Carl Stearns Clancy pictured aboard a Henderson on his return from his round the world trip





■ The modern day adventurer has better equipped machinery these days!

STORY: STEVIE JORDAN

In 1912, Carl Stearns Clancy, along with his mate Walter Storey, set off on a journey. Starting in New York, the pair headed for Ireland before going on to the UK. Parting ways in France, Clancy would continue through Europe before passing through North Africa, Sri Lanka, India and Japan. Eventually he completed a loop back to the US.

The entire route was accomplished on a 934cc Henderson — an innovative in-line four-cylinder machine that pumped out a whopping 7hp (5.2kW). It was the first recorded round-the-world motorcycle journey. It came almost 10 years after George A. Wyman travelled from San Francisco to New York on a 90cc motorised bicycle. This trip was considered to be the precursor to all two-wheeled adventure riding. Although he couldn't have known it at the time, Clancy — and arguably Wyman before him — were about to spark a trend that would roar into an entire industry over the next century.

■ One of CK Shepherd's numerous challenges was roads like this one in Indiana



Before it was called adventure motorcycling, the idea of long-distance riding or circumnavigating the globe by motorcycle appealed to a distinct minority. For trips through dirt and mud, sand and even snow, bikes at the time were predominantly being used to replace the horse and cart or as a mode of cheap transport. For the most part, these were humble, agricultural machines designed for relatively short distances. Any ideas of

going off-road stopped at hopping across the paddock from one side of the farm to the other.

However, some riders were not so convinced and when WW1 RAF veteran CK Shepherd travelled from the east to the west coast of the United States, a new era of discovery was born. Shepherd published his very British account in a book called *Across America by Motorcycle*. It detailed the three-month trip and his battle with the elements and numerous breakdowns to capture a newly born spirit of adventure.

Throughout the 1920s and '30s, ever more foolhardy adventure seekers were adopting two wheels to take off and see the world. After a pair of Danes (Svend Oluf Heiberg and Aksel Svane) covered one of the longest routes to date, Frenchmen Robert Sexé and Henry Andrieux set off on possibly the first trans-Siberian journey of its kind. Travelling on 350cc Gillet two-strokes, the duo totalled more than 40,000km before returning to Europe. It was another significant moment as adventure motorcycling started to reach the

"Any ideas of going off-road stopped at hopping across the paddock from one side of the farm to the other"

mainstream. Sexé and his written accounts of this long-distance journey, it's suggested, was the inspiration for *TinTin*.

While it was never going to be a mass-tourist-type holiday, intercontinental motorcycle touring was gaining momentum and tales of various far-flung journeys were being shared among all nationalities. British duo B H Cathrick and J P Castley travelled through the Middle East on BSA

V-twins. Young Americans Jim Wilson and Francis Flood completed the first recorded motorcycle journey across Africa on a Triumph-sidecar. Englishman Stanley Glanfield reached Australia — the other side of the world — on a 3.5hp Rudge Whitworth. The first Hungarians to cross Earth, Zoltan Sulkowsky and Gyula Bartha, took eight years to visit 68 countries on five continents using a Harley-Davidson-sidecar outfit,

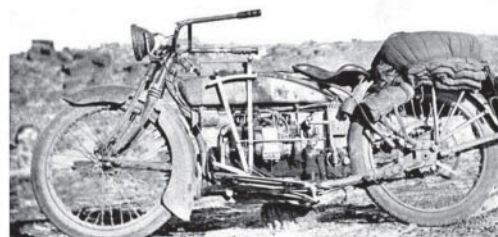


↑ Svend Oluf Heiberg and Aksel Svane at the start of their journey

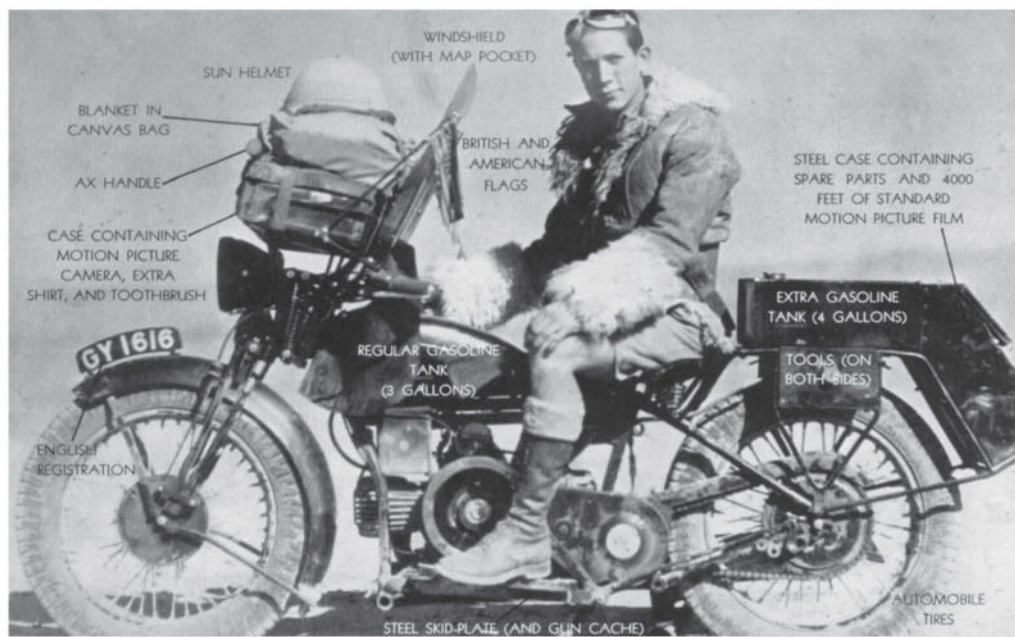


Z. SULKOWSKY et GY. BARTHA.
Le premier voyage complet autour du monde en moto, 160.000 km. de Budapest, Hongrie, 1928-1935, à travers 5 Continents et 64 pays.

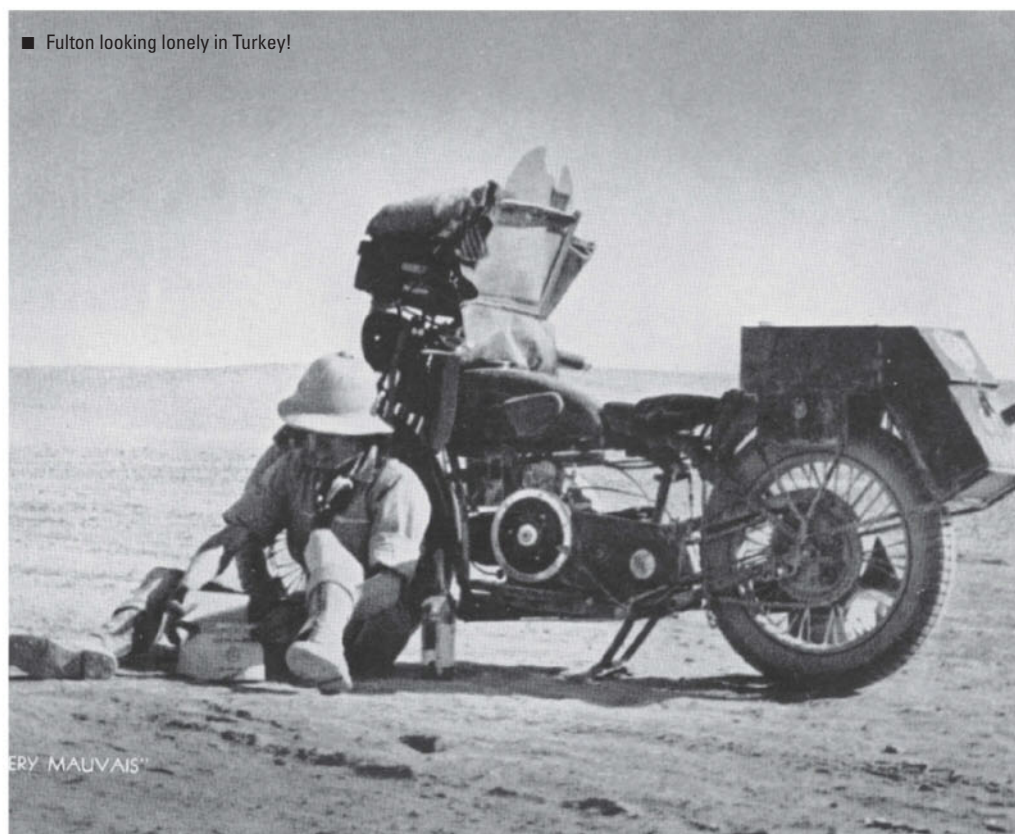
↑ Zoltan Sulkowsky and Gyula Bartha took eight years to visit 68 countries on five continents clocking up 170,000km in the process!



↑ CK Shepherd's adventure machine Lizzie, a 1918 Henderson



↑ Robert Edison Fulton's globe-trotting Douglas attends all the principles of the modern adventure machine!



clocking up 170,000km in the process!

Likewise, other written accounts were being documented to help the public's imagination run wild. Published in 1937, Robert Edison Fulton's classic, *One Man Caravan*, recorded his globe-trotting tour on a Douglas. A few years before this, Theresa Wallach and Florence Blenkiron set off from London on a 600cc Panther. Complete with sidecar and trailer, they became the first motorcycle riders to cross the length of Africa.

Wallach and Blenkiron's memoirs would eventually go on to be published in *The Rugged Road* years later. But perhaps the most famous of all to embark on a journey of such epic proportions was 23-year-old Ernesto Guevara — long before he earned his famous nickname Che. As *The Motorcycle Diaries* depicts, Guevara, then a medical student, left his native Argentina with his friend Alberto Granado on a 1939 500cc Norton. Travelling for the first nine months of 1952, the two South Americans covered more than 8000km.

Yet to enter politics or find fame as a cult rebel, Guevara was just one of many young riders making the most of a newly earned freedom in the post-war years. Countless others are said to have embarked on their ►



↑ Che Guevara's nine-month, 8000km journey is well documented

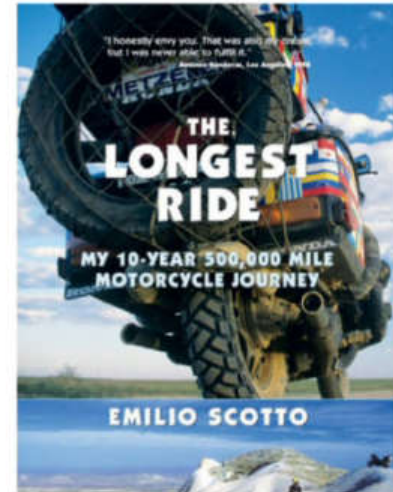
“Considered a bible to many, Simon’s epic 100,000km story needs no introduction to adventure motorcyclists across the world”

own personal journeys of discovery. This was a coming of age by pitting machine against the road (or lack thereof for the most part) to conquer the world.

Riding into the horizon, these men and women were now leaving ill-favoured sidecars behind. Instead they opted for a more practical two-wheeled set-up for the most part. Offering

ease of manoeuvrability and stowage when necessary, bikes of all sorts were being converted in preparation.

In the 1970s it was one man and his 500cc Triumph Tiger which would seize the public's imagination like never before. At the age of 42, Ted Simon set off from London on what would become a four-year adventure through



MUST READ

Five must-read books for any adventure rider (or aspiring adventure rider) that haven't already been referenced in this article.

1. The Longest Ride: My Ten-Year 500,000 Mile Motorcycle Journey, Emilio Scotto
2. Red Tape & White Knuckles, Lois Pryce
3. In Search of Greener Grass, Graham Field
4. Into Africa, Sam Manicom
5. Circling The Sun, (1 Woman, 1 Motorcycle, 1 World), Benka Pulko



Adventurers Theresa Wallach & Florence Stankin alongside their 500cc single-cylinder Panther motorcycle equipped with a sidecar and trailer.

45 countries. His account, *Jupiter's Travels*, would go on to become a best-seller. A bible to many, Simon's epic 100,000km story needs no introduction to adventure motorcyclists across the world. The German-born British journalist is considered to be the Godfather of two-wheeled journeying.

Adventure motorcycling took its biggest leap forward and cemented itself in the two-wheeled history books, largely because of this book. *Jupiter's Travels* encouraged masses of thrill-seeking would-be adventurers to pack their bags, prep their bikes and go. Simon himself sums it up to explain that it's not about the destination, but what it takes to get there.

“People who thought of my journey as a physical ordeal or an act of courage missed the point,” he said. “Courage and physical endurance were no more than useful items of equipment for me, like facility with languages or immunity ►



■ Stanley Glanfield's Rudge Whitworth outfit

LONG LIVE THE ADVENTURE KING

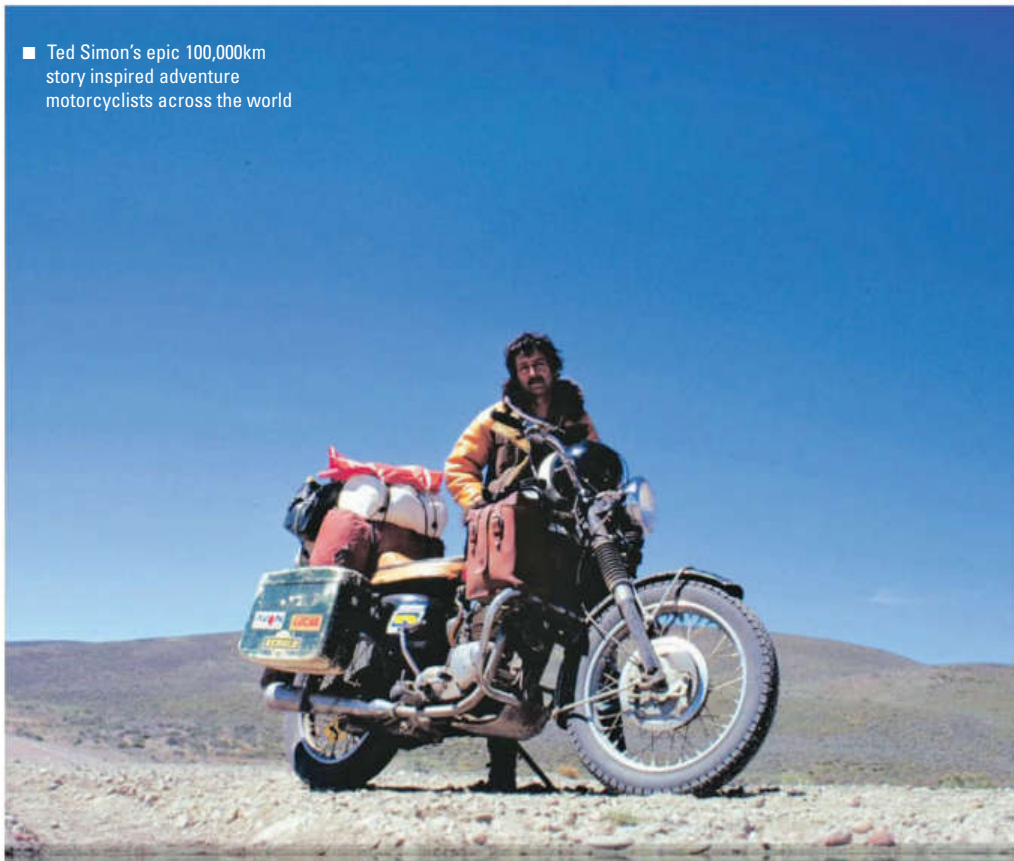
It's well documented that before embarking on their Long Way Round series, Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman approached specialist Austrian manufacturer KTM for sponsorship. Likewise, it's well documented that KTM said no. Or *nein*, to probably be more accurate.

The backup plan was BMW, though Honda was also reportedly considered. However, history was made when McGregor and Boorman set out on a pair of BMW R1150GS Adventure bikes which featured a range of high-end modifications (mostly thanks to accessories guru, Touratech).

In the same year, the BMW GS became the best-selling bike of its class and has since been unanimously crowned the king of adventure. Initially presented as the R80 G/S in 1980, the model's original 50hp output has since been developed in various guises. Today we're left with the resulting R 1200 GS, which pushes out 125hp and includes technology such as anti-lock braking, traction control and semi-active suspension, which was ground-breaking when first added.

Last year, the 500,000th example of a flat-twin BMW GS model series came off the production line, taking a bow to millions of fans across the globe in the process.

■ Ted Simon's epic 100,000km story inspired adventure motorcyclists across the world



“Nowadays, motorcycle manufacturers are increasingly focused on bring dual-purpose models to production, bikes which are equally adept on dirt and bitumen”

■ These two chaps inspired a new generation of adventure riders



■ Moto Guzzi Stelvio NTX



■ Aprilia Caponord Rally



MUST RIDE

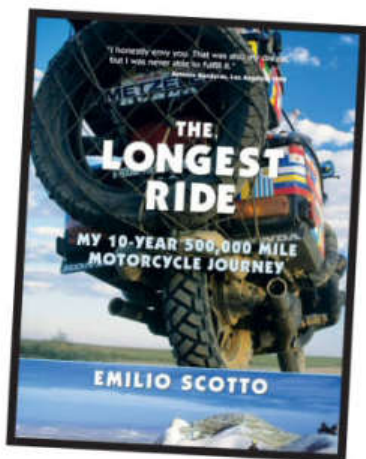
Five adventure Bikes which set our souls on fire and get us itching to get out on the (off)road.

1. BMW GS series
2. KTM 640 Adventure
3. Suzuki DR series
4. Triumph Tiger 800
5. Kawasaki KLR650

to hepatitis. The goal was comprehension, and the only way to comprehend the world was by making myself vulnerable to it so that it could change me. The challenge was to lay myself open to everybody and everything that came my way. The prize was to change and grow big enough to feel one with the whole world."

Enrapturing motorcyclists across the world, *Jupiter's Travels* is said to be the sole inspiration for a multitude of personal odysseys. In 2004, Ewan McGregor and *ARR*'s very own Charley Boorman with their *Long Way Round* adventure would take adventure riding further, to new heights and popularity.

Documenting their 31,000km journey from London to New York (eastwards) for a TV documentary and accompanying book, the actor friends set off through Europe before riding



through Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Siberia, Canada and finally the US. While copping more than their fair share of criticism (mostly due to the full production crew and squadron of support vehicles that followed in tow), it was arguably this full-scale production which helped develop the adventure motorcycling industry more than any other particular journey.

There is no disguising that McGregor and Boorman's exploits drove BMW sales through the roof, helped myriad touring operators spring into business, and, in basic terms, put the adventure motorcycle holiday in the windows of travel agents the world over.

Since then, the BMW R1200GS and R1200GS Adventure surpassed a production record, making it the most popular BMW motorcycle of all time. Put simply, that means there are more adventure riders on the road (and dirt). And more riders means a higher demand in the new and used market, which in turn means cheaper prices, more readily accessible parts and accessories.

Admittedly, the definition of adventure motorcycling has been blurred of late. Nowadays, motorcycle manufacturers are increasingly focused on bringing dual-purpose models to production, bikes which are equally adept on dirt and bitumen. As an example, take the Italian manufacturers, which are helping lead the



■ Honda's new Africa Twin

■ Suzuki V-Strom 650XT



■ The grand master, BMW's R1200GS

charge. Ducati, Aprilia and Moto Guzzi each has adventure touring models. Aside from BMW and pedigree stables KTM and Triumph, it's not news that all the Japanese factories are in on it too, and for good reason.

Reflect on the limitations of modern-day riding and it becomes clear why this sector of the market has had so much success in the last few years. Given the chance to escape urban constrictions, congested roads and big brother's obsession with speed cameras, it's no wonder the two-wheeled world salutes adventure riding.

Perhaps, though, we should also salute those before us who, with an uncanny sense of foresight, helped carve the tracks for one of the last hurrahs of two-wheeled freedom. One thing's for sure, adventure bikes — and the entire industry that goes with it — wouldn't be where it is today without them and the long, hard-slogged road they took. **ARR**

TESTING, TESTING

Here's a highly-versatile comms system and two very different sets of gloves to tickle your fancy this month

VERTIX RAPTOR-I BLUETOOTH INTERCOM REVIEW

Singapore company Vertix is now offering a motorcycle Bluetooth intercom called the Raptor-i that features a handlebar remote control option, safe volume function and noise-cancelling technology. Vertix is distributed in Australia by Security Gear, which also sells radar detectors, breathalysers and GPS trackers.

The Raptor-i is a little unusual as it is sold as separate items that you can mix and match. The basic non-FM controller is \$225, the FM model costs \$269 and the twin packs are \$399 for non-FM and \$449 with FM.

You buy the speaker headsets separately and get exactly what you want, rather than having to buy them later as an extra-cost accessory. The Series 1 headset at \$49.95 has two speakers and a boom or wired microphone for open and full-face helmets, while the Series 2 at \$59.95 has a heavier-gauge boom mic which is detached from the speaker for better mounting flexibility on flip-up modular helmets and open-face helmets. The Series 2 wired mic is also more rugged. Both have the same 0.3 watts of power and 200Hz-20kHz frequency range for very loud and clear sound reproduction.

However, if you want even better sound, more bass and more background noise reduction, you can buy an in-ear canal headset with ear-bud-style headphones for \$89.95. They have bass response of 20Hz, rather than the 200Hz of the speakers. All connections are

wedge-shaped mini USB sockets so you can't plug in just any earphones or speakers. That's a shame as I'd love to plug in my Earmold specially moulded earpieces for maximum background noise cancellation. There is also a remote controller for the handlebars that you can buy separately for \$119. Buying all the items individually makes it quite an expensive unit, but at least you get exactly what you want first time round.

Vertix says its strength is in its microphone noise-cancelling technology so riders can speak and listen clearly to intercom or phone calls at high speeds. They have done this by tuning the algorithm in the Digital Signal Processor (DSP) to filter out wind noise and motorcycle mechanical and exhaust noise.

Vertix tested it up to 210km/h and there is a YouTube video available that shows the

results. I can attest that people I've spoken to on the phone while I'm riding are stunned to hear that I was on a bike and not in a car with the windows wound up. The Vertix Raptor-i is quick, easy and foolproof to connect without the need of a password and you can pair it with up to two other Raptor-i intercoms.

The non-FM model is supposed to operate up to about 500m apart and the FM version up to 800m. I tested the non-FM model and they work right up to about 600m line-of-sight with no obstructions. That's just fine for a pillion and fellow riders who stay close. If they stray too far and intercom connection is lost, it automatically reconnects when the units are again within about 400m of each other.

If you want to pair a GPS to hear navigation guides, you can't listen to music or intercom as well unless it is a Garmin 500 or 600 that you



↑ The unit is unobtrusive on the outside of the helmet.



↑ Each piece of the system is available individually.

DETAILS

Vertex Raptor-i prices and specifications

FM (Single): \$269

FM (Twin): \$449

Non-FM (Single): \$225

Non-FM (Twin): \$399

Remote Control: \$119

Mounted Speaker Headset: \$49.95-\$59.95

In-ear Canal Headset: \$89.95

Battery Life: 8–10 hours of use, 30-day standby

Intercom Operating Range: Up to 800m / 2560ft (Up to 3 riders)

Maximum Operating Speed: Up to 210km/h / 130mph

Frequency: 2.40 ~ 2.48GHz

Bluetooth Compatibility: Version 2.0, Class 1
Profile Supported: Compatible with Bluetooth HSP, HFP, A2DP & AVRCP

Dimensions: 77 x 51 x 24mm

Weight: 48g / 1.7oz

Charging Port: Micro-USB

Speakers: Transducer moving-coil dynamic speakers

Frequency Response: 200Hz–20kHz (20Hz–20kHz ear buds)

Maximum Power: 0.3W

Available: <http://www.radardetectors.com.au/>



↑ The two different headset set-ups for open-face and full-face lids

pair via your mobile phone. A helpful feature is the safe volume function that returns the sound to comfortable listening levels every time you turn it on. With other units, if you've been riding at high speed and have turned the speakers up loud, the next time you turn the unit on it would blast your ears.

Like most modern motorcycle Bluetooth headsets, the Raptor-i has glove-friendly design with just four buttons which you either press for a split second or hold for several seconds. The large and contoured buttons are easy to feel and find even with winter gloves, however the length of time you have to press some buttons is way too long and you can confuse which function you want to perform.

For example, you have to hold the up and down volume buttons for a few seconds to adjust levels, but if you don't hold them long enough they jump forward or back a track. Multi functions on the one button may cut down on the number of buttons, but they

aren't always convenient or ideal in use. It also takes about five seconds of holding down the button to turn the unit on or off, which is a bit long. There is also a long 10-second delay when you switch between music and intercom.

Another unique feature of the Raptor-i is its mounting system. Unlike most Bluetooth units there is no clamp option. Instead, it comes with a stick-on pad that doesn't use Velcro but bristles that interconnect with bristles on the back of the control device. Like Velcro, it allows you to pull them off or adjust them. But the real advantage is the secure, flush and aerodynamic fit to the helmet, rather than hanging off like a sucker fish.

Vertex claims the controller is waterproof and operates in extreme temperatures. I used it in pouring rain and it worked fine. The power output has a rubber plug that protects it from water and the speaker plug is recessed. The Raptor-i remote control is easy to install on the handlebars and it works a

treat if you don't want to take your hands off the bars to answer a call, switch music tracks or adjust the volume.

It uses a CR2032 lithium battery that is claimed to last up to six months. A low power indicator light flashes five times when it needs a new battery. Apart from the slight nuisance of the button times, I would highly recommend this unit as a clear and easy-to-use unit for phone calls, intercom, FM or playing your music. – MARK HINCHLIFFE



↑ The helmet set-up in pieces



↑ Vertex has proven perfectly weatherproof in our test



TRIUMPH TRI CLIMATE GLOVE

Finding the perfect all-weather gloves that are warm, don't make your hands sweat, stay dry in the rain and don't feel like boxing gloves is difficult. But Triumph's Tri Climate motorcycle gloves seem to work.

Triumph sent me the gloves after I expressed frustration on Facebook with the lining coming out with my sweaty hands from a pair of expensive all-weather gloves. Instead of a traditional loose liner with stitching in the fingertips (which had come loose in my expensive gloves), the Triumph gloves bond each layer so it feels like one glove, not several layers of glove.

Not only will the lining never come out with your sweaty hands, it also reduces the bulky "boxing glove" feeling so you have more sensitivity of the throttle and levers.

OK, so problem one solved, but I still didn't believe a pair of gloves retailing for \$149 would be better than gloves costing about 25 per cent more. I am also always sceptical of anything that claims to be "all-weather". They usually aren't. However, I was fortunate in my test regimen to have several days of Queensland winter weather where the temperature varied from single digits to the mid-20s, with some

rain thrown in for good measure. After testing in these varied conditions, I can tell you they work. I stayed warm and dry, but never sweaty.

To test for extreme weather, I tried a few home-made solutions. For excessive heat, I put my hands in a hot oven for a minute. I don't think they would be too comfortable when the mercury reaches 30 degrees, but fine for anything under that.

For extreme cold, I clenched my gloved hand around some frozen bacon in the freezer for a minute. Nice and warm and no chill off the bacon.

For wind chill, I rode an hour at 110km/h on the M1 to the Gold Coast in 10°C with one hand in a Tri Climate glove and the other in an extremely expensive winter glove. My hands felt equally warm.

For heavy rain, I plunged my hands into a bucket of water for several minutes. While I wouldn't normally dip my hands deeper than the glove itself, these have an elasticised gauntlet that forms a tight fit around your jacket to prevent rain getting in, so I also dunked deeper than the top of the gloves. They didn't leak until the water got over the top of the gauntlet, then it trickled in. However, in real-world rain tests, they didn't leak at all.

As for the comfort, they are great. No



↑ Elasticised cuff closure

bunching in the palms. They slip on and pull off easily and the stretch top isn't difficult to put on like the drawstring top on other waterproof gloves which require a second person to help you. Once on, the gloves feel flexible, not stiff, and there is enough sensitivity in the fingertips to operate a Bluetooth unit.

I didn't crash test them, but Triumph assures us the SuperFabric is used by many military services around the world and resists abrasion, slashing and stains. The palms also have leather patches for extra abrasion resistance and there is soft CE armour on the knuckles. They also say the material dries quickly and after my failed full-immersion bucket test, I can attest to that!

It's also breathable and the combination of Thinsulate and Outlast materials used in the construction of the gloves not only makes them comfortable in most temperatures, but keeps them a lot thinner than some others, especially my thick Reusch gloves.

While they won't replace mesh gloves in summer's searing heat, I think I've found my perfect all-weather gloves. — MH

DETAILS

Triumph's Tri Climate glove

Size: Small to 3XL

Colour: Black

Price: \$149

Visit: triumphmotorcycles.com.au



The rigours of testing ...





■ Exhaust vent on the back of the hand



↑ Textured index finger helps with grip



↑ The quality is plain to see in the details



↑ Fingers are ventilated



↑ Real carbon here!

FIVE RFX1

As the days are getting warmer, now's a good time to invest in a set of summer gloves. Lighter in the palm, more tactile in the fingers and well ventilated, they make riding in summer cooler and safer.

The choice of summer gloves is quite varied these days. There are a lot of styles, a lot of colours and a lot of different features in each of them. At one end of the spectrum you've got some very short, light, stylish gloves. They don't offer protection past your wrist and aren't the kind of level of protection you require if the worst thing happens on the open road. Then there's your traditional "race"-type glove: full length, armoured and ventilated.

Five Gloves has an extensive range of gloves for every type of application: commuting, touring, racing, you name it. Many have plain colour schemes, while others like my Australian RFX1 race glove stands out from the crowd.

With a balance of track and road riding, the RFX1 has served as a road glove mostly. From the second I put it on it felt great. No irritating seams, lining that doesn't sit right or finger pockets oddly shaped. Kevlar, carbon and full-grain leather are the protective materials in the

gloves. Stretch Kevlar in the top of the glove makes for a comfortable fit.

Inlet vents on the knuckles and an exhaust on top of the wrist keep the glove very cool. Both vents run through a soft padding material so you don't get a brunt of air hitting you. As such, they are warm enough on a cold morning. Just leave them at home in winter.

In our chat with Five's main man in ARR#116, he touched on the kind of detail that goes into making a Five glove. With production extremely laborious, their gloves come at a cost that a lot of people would balk at. But considering it is a premium price that shows in the quality, performance and, with time I'm assuming, great durability, they are worth the money. It's a premium price for a premium product.— MATT SHIELDS

DETAILS

Five RFX1

Size and colour: Small to 3XL, black or black/white (RFX1 GP Australia: Small to 2XL)

Price: \$275 (RFX1 GP Australia: \$299.95)

Contact: 1300 885 355

Visit: motonational.com.au

WHATZ NEW

OSPREY DAYLITE

Osprey has a range of accessories designed to add comfort and practicality to your adventure, allowing you the freedom to embrace the open road. One of these is Osprey's Waterproof Map Carrier. Places where smart phones and GPS devices won't suffice will see you pulling a map in and out of your pack or jacket as you navigate your way along. Maps can get wet or rip all too easily and that can spell disaster. This rollout map carrier is watertight and compact enough to take anywhere.

Price: \$29.95

Visit: outdooragencies.com.au



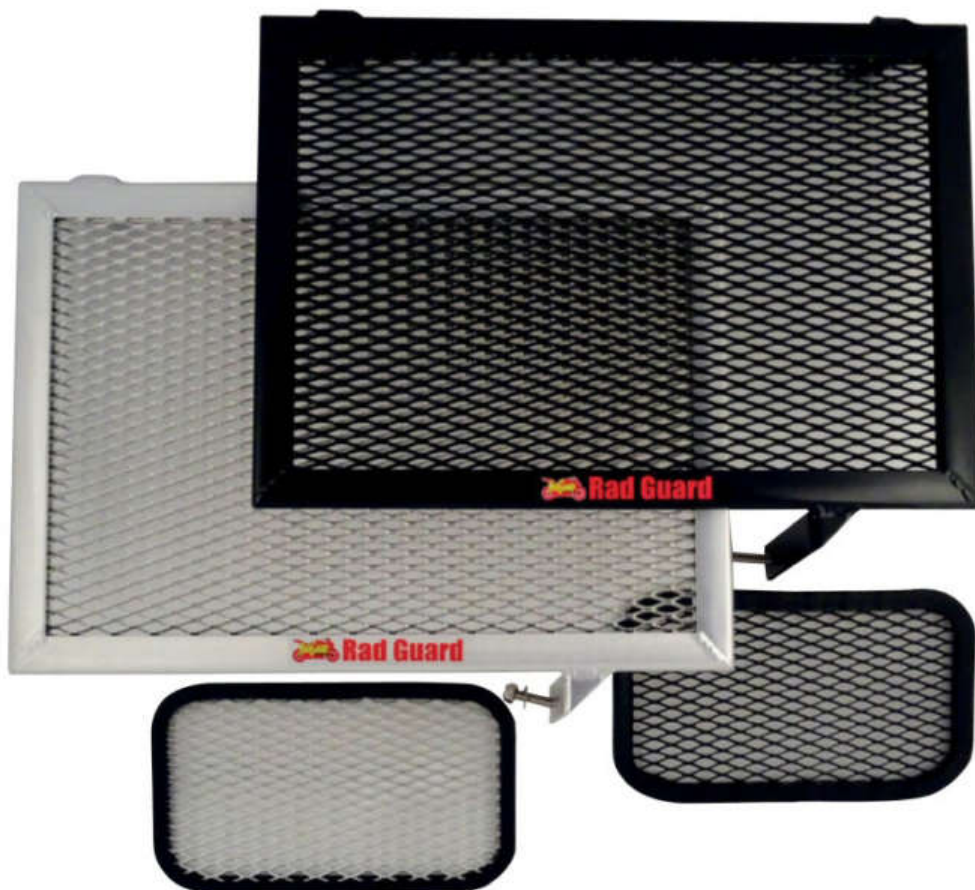
DUCATI MULTISTRADA RAD GUARDS

Ever been stuck with a holed radiator or oil cooler in the middle of nowhere? If you haven't, it's not fun. There's a way to prevent it by protecting your motorcycle's oil and cooling systems with Rad Guards and there is now a radiator and oil cooler guard for the Ducati Multistrada 1200. Light, strong and easy to fit, the guards are made from high-grade aluminium and are available in powdercoated black or polished alloy.

Price: \$229

Visit: radguard.com.au

Contact: (02) 6658 0060





BRAKEFIX

Has your bike ever rolled forward off the sidestand and fallen over? Do you live on a sloping block with a steep driveway? Do you transport your bike in a trailer? Do you have kids that could potentially roll your bike off the stand? The days of using cable ties to stop your bike rolling are over with the arrival of the BrakeFix.

The BrakeFix wraps around the throttle grip of your bike and the front brake lever. You then adjust the BrakeFix to apply light pressure to the front brake lever, preventing your bike from rolling forwards or backwards and potentially falling over.

The BrakeFix is perfect for cruisers, touring bikes, sportsbikes, minibikes, trailbikes and even quadbikes. A very handy, durable, compact tool that will store easily under the seat of your bike or in your tool pouch.

Visit: proaccessories.com.au

Contact: (07) 3277 0693

Price: \$17.95



YAMAHA TRACER BAGSTER TANK COVER

Bagster has released a new custom tank cover to suit the Yamaha MT-09Tracer. Fit and colours are perfectly matched to the Tracer, providing full coverage of the tank. When you add an optional Bagster tank bag you have a safe, secure and convenient luggage option. Available in black, grey or red, the custom tank covers are available to suit more than 450 makes and models.

Price: \$249

Visit: ctaaustralia.com.au

Contact: (02) 9820 4444

MOTHERWELL LUGGAGE FOR INDIAN SCOUT

Zorros is now the distributor of the Motherwell solo luggage rack for the new Indian Scout. Available in two finishes — chrome and black — the luggage rack joins the growing list of accessories available from Zorros for the new Polaris Indian Motorcycles and in particular the Indian Scout.

Visit: zorros.net.au

Contact: 0433 106 669



KRIEGA URBAN MESSENGER BAG

Backpack and soft luggage guru Kriega has just released the satchel-style, fully waterproof Urban messenger bag. Perfect for commuting with a laptop, it is simple to adjust and can be worn on the left or right. Like all Kriega gear, it comes with a 10-year guarantee.

Price: \$239

Visit: kriega.com.au

Contact: 0409 959 737



SIDI ROARRR

Sidi's Roarr boot is a sporty boot designed for the street and track. CE Approved, they have closable vents, adjustable arch supports and replaceable toe scrapers making them safe, comfortable and versatile. They feature an anti twist ankle brace, shin plate and shock absorbing sole for an excellent level of protection.

Sizes 40 – 48 (US 7.5 – 13.5)

Price: \$539.95

Visit: mcleodaccess.com.au

TOURATECH TAKES ON THE KAWASAKI KLR 650

Touratech recently acquired a KLR 650 and had a staff member equip it from top to bottom with parts specifically designed by the company in Germany.

Starting with a suspension upgrade, a host of accessories was fitted to make the KLR as good an adventure bike as we know it could be. The end result is documented in an adventure film you can find on Touratech's website. You will also find the full list of KLR650 parts there as well as a host of rally, touring and adventure products.

Visit: touratech.com.au

Contact: 03 5729 5529



KAWASAKI BAR RUNNER AND STUBBY HOLDER

Show your colours on your bar or in the palm of your hand with Kawasaki's genuine bar runner and stubby cooler. Featuring full-colour Kawasaki models all over them, there'll be no doubting what your favourite brand of machine is.

Price: Stubby cooler \$7.65, bar runner \$24.27

Visit: kawasaki.com.au/dealers/find-a-dealer



READERS RITE

WINNER

Don't forget to write! We mean it. We love to hear from you and everyone else does too; these pages are among the most popular in the magazine.

Preferably, keep letters under 300 words so we can fit more in, though we will allow the odd exception without taking to it with the editorial knife. Yes, we will chop 'em when we have to. Do include your real name and some contact details, just in case we need to clarify something. Please write to roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au or send mail to *Road Rider*, Unit 5, 6-8 Byfield Street, North Ryde NSW 2113 — **Matho**



↑ Wood you look at these works of art!



WOOD STUFF

It was good to see the wooden motorcycle in issue 115. My father made this a couple of years ago. He scaled it off his Virago 250. The Model T came next after he saw one at a car rally. He took some measurements and photographs and scaled it off that. The bonnet opens to reveal an engine and the steering is functional.

Anthony Perkin, Email

“My Father made this a couple of years ago. He scaled it off his Virago 250”





↑ Electronics allow you to find your limits with more confidence

NOT MEDIOCRE

I just read your editorial in ARR #115. I've been riding since I got my licence at 17 and been put in hospital twice at the hands of a motorcycle.

Just because I don't ride the latest electronic wizard, do 400km/h or wear my sliders out in every corner doesn't make me mediocre. I take exception at being referred to as such by someone as yourself. Not everyone has the same opportunities as you enjoy.

Peter Glasson, Email

I must have written that editorial rather poorly because you've inferred an accusation I did not intend to make, and for that I apologise. I can see where I went wrong.

I'm sure you must have pushed yourself at times — not necessarily to break traction or

get your knee down or set a new speed record. You've probably pushed to learn something new, challenged yourself by carrying on in conditions you didn't anticipate, or in some other ways taken yourself outside your comfort zone, whether or not it was intentional. That's the kind of thing I was referring to, and that's the kind of thing I believe teaches us to be better riders, regardless of electronic wizardry. Still, the electronics provide an improved safety net that lets us explore the bike's limits with more confidence. The better we know the limits, the better we will ride.

Again, sorry about the implied insult, Peter. I wouldn't accuse anyone who's ridden regularly and for so long of being mediocre! — Matho

“Just because I don't ride the latest electronic wizard, do 400km/h or wear my sliders out in every corner doesn't make me mediocre.”

OPEN-FACE, OPEN TARGET?

They say you can tell a happy biker by the bugs in his teeth when he smiles. One of my regular riding companions discovered the downside of this effect on our last ride together. He's the only one in the group who wears an open-face helmet, so he's the only one likely to get bugs in his pearl whites, but this time it was a wasp and it got his lip!

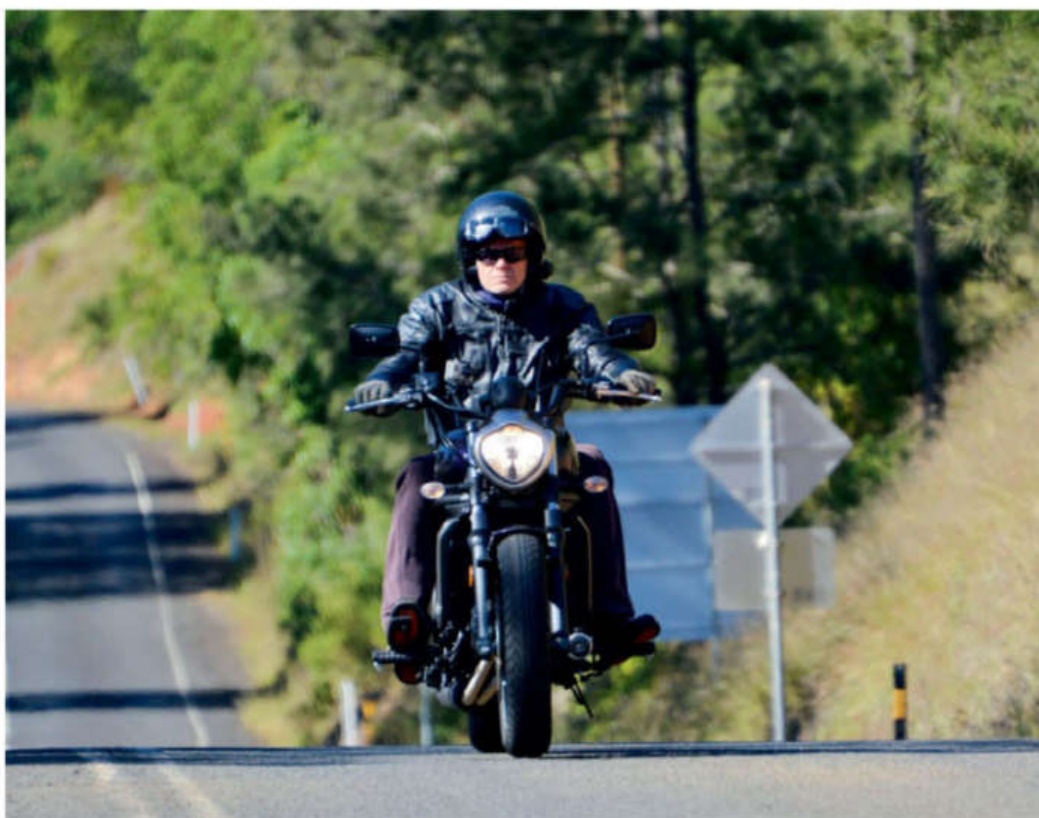
Well, we couldn't tell if he was happy or not because we couldn't see his teeth for the size of his swollen lip. He definitely wasn't smiling.

It reminded me why I switched to using full-face helmets more than 10 years ago. It's not always about safety — it's also a matter of comfort.

Adam Bennett, Email

I was very relieved to be in a full-face when it hailed on me a few months ago!

— Matho



↑ On days like this you can't beat an open face!

FORK FIDDLING

Thanks one and all for your efforts in producing a great read every month — although I must admit sometimes other commitments mean I am not always on top of my reading. While covering a few back issues recently, I read with interest Dean Mellor's article on suspension and, in particular, the issue of regularly replacing front fork oil.

Reading the article made me recall having to do this regularly on the dirt bikes I rode in my misspent youth. Many of those bikes had the facility to change the oil without dismantling the forks, ie, a drain/fill plug at the lower end of each fork.

This was some time ago and after a 30-something-year hiatus, I have returned to motorcycling with the purchase of a much-loved, third-hand, 2007 model BMW R1200RT. After reading your article I checked the maintenance manual to see if it was a recommended service item or if they had a procedure for changing the front fork oil. In short, it is not listed in the normal service

items and the only procedure is outlined in the "overhaul of the front forks" procedure. While I accept the intention of the magazine article and experience (albeit long ago) has proved it so, I must admit I am reluctant to disturb the front fork seals when everything is working well.

My question is: given the bike has done approximately 65,000km and I would guess the front forks have never been apart, and also with the improvements in modern oils and seals, and the risks one runs in creating leaks which weren't previously there, would this still be an issue worth considering on my BMW? My guess is, if I am going to go the trouble of pulling the forks apart to change the oil, I might as well fit new seals while there.

Thanks for your time and I look forward to your reply.

Keep up the great work,

Bruce Pearcey, Email

Before you go any further, check your front-end. You've got a shock absorber, not regular forks. If your forks look good,

they should be working fine. The front shock, however, may be pretty tired by now but changing its oil ain't exactly easy. I'd speak with a suspension specialist about rebuilding it (and maybe the rear shock) or even look at aftermarket replacements. Having said that, if the bike doesn't wobble or weave and holds a line fairly well, and there are no oil leaks, you may be justified in deciding to leave it alone. Either way, enjoy! The RT is a lovely bike. — Matho



↑ You've got forks up front and a shock on an RT so suspension work is a little more involved!

"I did pretty much the exact same trip in July last year on the same bike for eight days and visited some of the places that Dave talks about!"

DEJA VU

My July mag arrived and I had a quick glance through and noticed the article from Dave Britten on riding in Scotland. I saw the photos and thought, "I've been to those places." I then saw the photos of the orange F800GT and thought, "I've ridden one of them in Scotland too!" Then I saw the number plate and thought, "Hang on, that's the bike that I rode last year to the same places in Bonnie Scotland!"

I did pretty much the exact same trip

in July last year on the same bike for eight days and visited some of the places that Dave talks about. I reckon that bike is getting used to showing Aussies around the place! I agree with Dave that Scotland is a great place to ride, with deserted roads, absolutely spectacular scenery and fantastic pubs and B&Bs to visit. I too would "go back like a shot".

If any of your readers are considering doing something similar, the A836 from Lairg to Tounge via Altnaharra is also amazing — endless roads, bridges and scenery exactly

as per Dave's photo's. I've attached a couple of photos from my trip. I've put one in for Dave of the very pleasant Plockton Inn.

Glenn Ahern

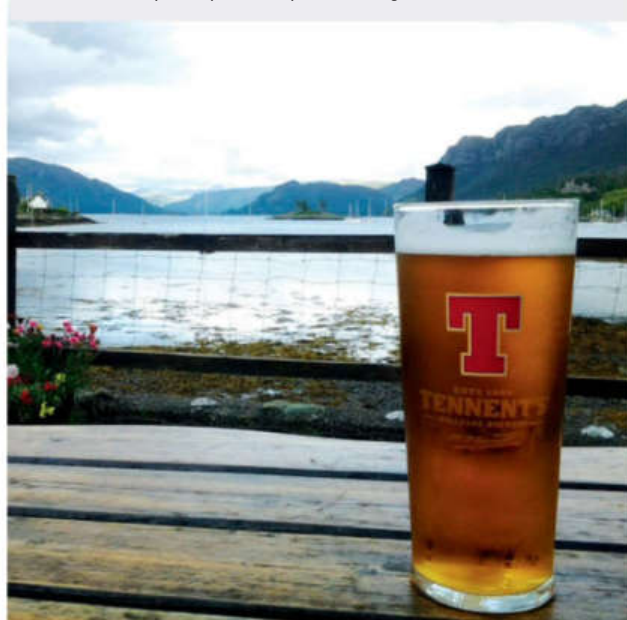
Email

It's a small world, isn't it! Looks like we Aussies are taking plenty of business to Motorrad Central over there (rentamotorcycle.co.uk).

From what you and Dave said about Scotland, I've no doubt it's one to put on the must-ride list. — Matho



↓ Plockton is the perfect place for a pint after riding some of Scotland's best roads



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ROAD BIKE & SCOOTER PRICE GUIDE

Can I afford it? Is there something better for the money?

New bike prices can go up and down like the stock market, so in every issue we'll bring you the sticker prices. To be completely up to date with things like factory discounts and incentives, check the *Road Rider* website (www.roadrider.com.au) where we will bring you all the special deals, bonus offers and cashback promotions we can find.

We have included the importers' websites, which is the place to go if you're looking for more information. You'll see that we haven't listed every bike on the market (yet) but we aim to get there with all of them.

Sometimes even we struggle to find the details of the smaller, newer importers. Meanwhile, enjoy this most meaningful of Australian bike listings, covering the bikes you're interested in.

The prices are the most up-to-date ones available from the distributors. They may change, of course, subject to specials coming and going.

We've also made it abundantly clear which prices are ride-away and which don't include on-road costs; the difference to your final payout can be significant, so don't compare apples with oranges.

BRAND & MODEL WE SAY PRICE

APRILIA

www.aprilia.com.au

Aprilia prices are maximum recommended advertised ride-away price.

Road

Shiver Sport 750 ABS	Oh so good	\$14,000ra
Tuono V4R APRC	Upright sportsbike	\$22,000ra
Tuono V4 1100 RR	Naked 1100cc V4? Yes!	\$23,000ra
Tuono V4 1100 Factory	Take the RR and add more	\$26,000ra
RSV4 R APRC	High tech, high spec	\$24,000ra
RSV4 RR	Higher spec, higher speed	\$25,000ra
RSV4 R Factory APRC ABS	Racing black	\$30,000ra
RSV4 RR Race Pack	Ready to race	\$31,000ra

Adv Touring

Caponord Strada	High-tech all-road traveller	\$20,000ra
Caponord Touring	Truly great all-rounder	\$23,000ra
Caponord Rally	The hardcore Capo	\$24,000ra

Scooters

SR50R Carb SBK	Biaggi replica	\$4000ra
SR MT 50 2T	Entry point	\$2900ra
SR MT 125 4T	Cheap commuting	\$3900ra
SR MT 125 4T SBK LE	SBK-styled commuter	\$3900ra
Scarabeo 200 ie	Crisp performer	\$5900ra
SR Max 300	Do it all	\$8000ra
SRV 850 ATC ABS	Large with the lot	\$15,000ra

BENELLI

www.urbanmotoimports.com.au

Road

BN251	Nice starter	\$TBA
BN302	Italy's response to the 300cc LAMS	\$5590+orc
BN600i	Base-model mid-sized four	\$8990+orc
BN600S LAMS	New LAMS model	\$8990+orc
BN600R	New sporty naked bike	\$9990+orc
BN600RS LAMS	Another new LAMS model	\$9990+orc
BN600GT	Mid-size sports-touring	\$8990+orc
BN600GTS	LAMS model	\$8990+orc
TNT 899	Mid-sized entertainer	\$16,990+orc
TNT 1130R	Naked dynamite	\$22,690+orc
Tre-K 1130	Out of the ordinary	\$18,490+orc

Adv Touring

TRE-K Amazonas	Be an individual	\$19,690+orc
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Scooters

Cafenero 150	New scooter on the market	\$8990+orc
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BIMOTA

www.urbanmotoimports.com.au

Road

BB3	1000cc BMW, Italian flair	\$72,888+orc
DB5R	Light and lovely sportsbike	\$37,990+orc

DB8 Oro Nero	Expensive excitement	\$84,990+orc
Tesi 3D Naked	The full skeleton on show	\$55,990+orc
DB9	Muscle streetfighter	\$44,990+orc
DB9S	Sharper on the street	\$46,990+orc
DB10	Sharp style	\$37,290+orc
DB11	Testastretta 11 at last	\$56,990+orc

BMW

www.bmwmotorrad.com.au

Road

F 800 R	Neat naked parallel-twin	\$13,100+orc
S 1000 R	Naked supermodel	\$19,290+orc
S 1000 RR	Still the one to beat	\$22,990+orc
HP4 Competition	For serious sports riders	\$32,450+orc
R 1200 R	Now with liquid cooling	\$21,950+orc
R 1200 R Sport	Naked and fit boxer	\$22,350+orc
R 1200 R Exclusive	Naked and special boxer	\$22,350+orc
R nineT	Simplicity with max style	\$21,250+orc
R 1200 RT	Have your cake and eat it	\$30,790+orc
K 1300 R	Evil Wulf	\$21,990+orc
K 1300 S	Autobahn eater	\$23,990+orc
K 1300 S Motorsport	Flashy sports-tourer for 2015	\$28,990+orc
K 1600 GT	Power touring	\$35,990+orc
K 1600 GTL	Euro luxury touring	\$37,590+orc
K 1600 GTL Exclusive	VIP	\$42,500+orc

Adv Touring

G 650 GS	You'll be surprised	\$9990+orc
G 650 GS Sertao	Rough it or not	\$10,990+orc
F 700 GS	Not really a 700	\$12,890+orc
F 700 GS	Low suspension model	\$13,140+orc
F 800 GS	Great adv tourer	\$16,690+orc

■ Benelli has introduced its new and only scooter to the Aussie market, the Cafenero 150. Available in dealerships for \$3390+orc



PRICE GUIDE

F 800 GS.....	Low suspension model	\$16,940+orc
F 800 GS Adventure	Go further	\$18,650+orc
F 800 GT	Dynamically designed.....	\$16,300+orc
S 1000 XR	Tourist Trophy personified	\$22,190+orc
R 1200 GS	All-road master.....	\$21,950+orc
R 1200 GS Adventure.....	Luxuriously roughing it.....	\$24,550+orc

Scooter

C 600 Sport.....	Sporty maxi	\$13,990+orc
C 600 Sport Special Edition.....	Here in October	\$15,090+orc
C 650 GT.....	Let's tour!	\$14,990+orc
C 650 GT Special Edition	Seat heating.....	\$16,665+orc
C 650 GT SE LS	Low suspension model	\$16,465+orc

BOLLINI

www.motorsportimporters.com.au

Road

Speed 200	Economy ticket	\$2290+orc
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Cruiser

Retro 200.....	New releas	\$TBA
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CAN-AM (BRP)

www.brp.com

Road

Spyder RS SM5.....	The “Spyder” experience	\$19,990+orc
Spyder RSS SE5	Supersports auto	\$23,990+orc
Spyder RS SPE SE5.....	Special-edition RS.....	\$25,390+orc
Spyder ST SE5	The sports-touring Spyder.....	\$25,490+orc
Spyder ST LTD SE5.....	The ST with more	\$28,990+orc
Spyder F3 SM6.....	Cruiser-style model with 1330cc triple ..	\$25,790+orc
Spyder F3 S SE6	F3 with semi-auto gears and more.....	\$28,890+orc
Spyder RT SM6.....	New 1330cc triple engine.....	\$31,490+orc
Spyder RTS SE6.....	RT plus semi-auto and more.....	\$39,990+orc
Spyder RT Limited SE6.....	The full touring triple.....	\$41,990+orc
Spyder RT SPE	Top-spec special edition.....	\$41,690+orc

CF MOTO

www.cfmoto.com.au

Road

VNight	Great learner.....	\$2690+orc
Jetmax 250	Freeway capable scooter	\$4190+orc
Leader.....	Not fussy	\$2190+orc
650NK.....	May ruffle some feathers.....	\$6290+orc
650TK.....	Bargain touring	\$7749+orc

Cruiser

V5.....	Where's the engine?	\$4190+orc
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CONFEDERATE

www.urbanmotoimports.com.au

Cruiser

R131 Fighter	Heavyweight champ.....	\$POA
X132 Hellcat.....	Badass	\$79,990+orc
X132 Hellcat Combat.....	American war machine	\$94,990+orc
X132 Hellcat Speedster.....	American muscle	\$98,000+orc
X135 Wraith	Industrial art.....	\$POA
R135 Wraith Combat.....	American firepower.....	\$POA

DAELIM

www.daelim.com.au

Road

VJF250.....	Adequate style.....	\$3990+orc
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Cruiser

Daystar 250 EFI	Fat, feet-forward cruiser.....	\$4920+orc
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Scooter

Bbone	Its clothes are off.....	\$3490+orc
Besbi.....	Small and cute.....	\$2190+orc
S1	Nice style.....	\$2990+orc

DUCATI

www.ducati.com.au

Road

Monster 659 ABS	Monster the LAM	\$12,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Icon (Ducati Red) ..	Entry-level	\$12,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Icon ('62Yellow)	As above but yellower.....	\$13,140+orc
Ducati Scrambler Urban Enduro	For the burbs and backroads.....	\$14,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Classic.....	Living in the '70s	\$14,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Full Throttle	Flat track performer	\$14,990+orc
Monster 821 Dark	The little beast steps up	\$16,290+orc

Monster 821 Red.....	Red devil.....	\$16,790+orc
Monster 821 White.....	Angelic monster.....	\$16,990+orc
Monster 821 Stripe	Striped paint job.....	\$17,990+orc
Streetfighter 848	Precision fighter, special price.....	\$17,490+orc
Panigale 899 Red.....	Smaller, sweeter superbike	\$19,990+orc
Panigale 899	In white.....	\$20,490+orc
Hypermotard Red	A hooligan on wheels.....	\$16,990+orc
Hypermotard	In black.....	\$17,290+orc
Hypermotard SP	With tricked-up suspension	\$21,490+orc
Hyperstrada.....	Manners & madness	\$17,990+orc
Monster 1200	Original 1200	\$19,990+orc
Monster 1200	With stripes — order only.....	\$25,490+orc
Monster 1200 S Red	With better bits	\$24,290+orc
Monster 1200 S.....	In white.....	\$24,490+orc
Panigale 1299	100cc more for 2015.....	\$27,990+orc
Panigale S ABS.....	Electronic Öhlins!.....	\$33,990+orc
Panigale R ABS.....	Race passion.....	\$45,990+orc

Cruiser

Diavel	A true power-cruiser	\$24,490+orc
Diavel Red.....	The devil on your shoulder	\$24,990+orc
Diavel Carbon Red.....	Deal with the devil	\$30,290+orc
Diavel Carbon White.....	An angel in disguise?	\$30,490+orc
Diavel Titanium	Harder than steel.....	\$39,990+orc

Adv Touring

Multistrada 1200 ABS.....	4 in 1 with ABS	\$22,990+orc
Multistrada 1200 DVT.....	Smoother all-round master	\$23,990+orc
Multistrada S DVT	Higher tech, in red.....	\$27,990+orc
Multistrada S DVT	In white.....	\$28,490+orc
Multistrada 1200 S Touring.....	See the world	\$28,490+orc
Multistrada 1200 S Pikes Peak	Flashy paint job	\$31,990+orc
Multistrada 1200 Granturismo.....	Tour perfection	\$30,490+orc

ERIK BUELL RACING

www.urbanmotoimports.com.au

Road

1190RS Carbon	175hp, 176kg of joy	\$56,990+orc
1190RX.....	Sporting masterpiece	\$26,490+orc
1190SX.....	Superbike basis.....	\$23,490+orc
1190AX.....	The adventurous one	\$TBA

HARLEY-DAVIDSON

www.harley-davidson.com

All H-D prices are ride-away.

Cruiser

XG500 Street 500.....	Learner legal	\$9995ra
XL883L SuperLow	For the shorties.....	\$14,750ra
XL883N Iron 883	Iron tough	\$14,995ra
XL1200C Custom	Customary show off	\$18,750ra
XL1200X Forty-Eight.....	Retro cool.....	\$18,995ra
XL1200V Seventy-Two	Vintage muscle.....	\$18,495ra
XL1200T Super Low	Cool little tourer.....	\$19,250ra
VRSCDX Night Rod Special.....	Drag bike	\$27,250ra
VRSCF Muscle.....	Muscle me	\$26,995ra
FXDB Street Bob	Versatile.....	\$22,495ra
FXDBB Street Bob Special.....	Street smarts	\$23,995ra
FXDL Low Rider	Not laying low	\$23,495ra
FXDWG Wide Glide	Let your hair hang down.....	\$24,995ra
FXDF Fat Bob.....	Lay off the burgers, Bob!	\$25,495ra
FLD Dyna Switchback.....	Dress up, dress down.....	\$26,250ra
FLS Softail Slim.....	Slim, yet PH fat!	\$26,250ra
FXST Softail Standard.....	The original ride.....	\$27,250ra
FLSTFB Fat Boy Lo.....	Low bruiser	\$28,750ra
FLSTF Fat Boy	Big bruiser.....	\$28,995ra
FLSTN Softail Deluxe	Classy dude	\$28,995ra
FLSTNSE CVO Softail Deluxe.....	110ci, LEDs plus	\$44,995ra
FXSB Breakout.....	Urban street styling	\$29,495ra
FLSTC Heritage S'tail Classic	Visually beautiful.....	\$29,995ra
FLHRC Road King Classic	Be the king	\$32,495ra
FLHXS Street Glide Special.....	The original bagger	\$34,995ra
FLHXSE CVO Street Glide.....	110ci ripper	\$46,995ra

PRICE GUIDE

FLTRXS Road Glide Special.....	Dynamic, fixed-fairing tourer	\$34,495ra
FLTRXSE CVO Rd Glide Ultra.....	Maybe H-D's best tourer	\$48,995ra
FLHTK Electra Glide Ultra Ltd	Works burger	\$37,995ra
FLHTKSE CVO Ultra Ltd	110ci mega-tourer.....	\$50,995ra

■ A few of Honda's model prices have risen slightly in this new financial year including the F6B, but the CB400A has had a big price drop from \$11,199+orc down to \$9999+orc



HONDAwww.honda.com.au

Road		
CB125E	Cheap commuter	\$2199+orc
CB300FA.....	250cc weight, 300cc power	\$5699+orc
CBR300.....	Big H attacks the Ninja 300	\$4999+orc
CBR300 ABS	The anti-lock brake option	\$5499+orc
CBR300R.....	Special edition.....	\$5199+orc
CBR300R.....	Special edition ABS	\$5699+orc
CB400A ABS	Bulletproof	\$9999+orc
CBR500R.....	Sporty little twin.....	\$7499+orc
CBR500R ABS.....	ABS option.....	\$7999+orc
CB500F ABS.....	Sweet as.....	\$7499+orc
CB650F ABS.....	New naked four.....	\$9999+orc
CBR600RR.....	Versatile supersport.....	\$14,390+orc
CBR650F ABS	Mid-ranger with torque.....	\$10,599+orc
CTX700DA	Dual Clutch Transmission	\$10,899+orc
NC750SA ABS	The most practical naked bike?.....	\$8899+orc
VFR800	Tried and true package	\$14,699+orc
VFR800X Crossrunner.....	Sports-tourer goes all-rounder	\$16,299+orc
CBR1000RR.....	Ride what Casey rides.....	\$16,999+orc
CBR1000RR ABS.....	Blade with braking backup	\$16,899+orc
VFR1200F ABS	For the tech heads.....	\$16,999+orc
GL1800B F6B.....	Stripped Wing.....	\$25,999+orc
GL1800 Goldwing Luxury.....	The ultimate luxury tourer	\$36,299+orc

Cruiser		
VT400	Classic-styled LAM	\$9399+orc
CTX700N ABS	A bike for everything	\$9499+orc
VT750C Shadow	Classic appeal.....	\$11,749+orc
CTX1300.....	V4 cruiser with unique style	\$18,499+orc
VT1300CX Fury	Chopped dragster.....	\$15,599+orc
GL1800C F6C Valkyrie	Valkyrie returns with muscle	\$20,199+orc

Adv Touring		
CB500X ABS.....	Adventure sports	\$7599+orc
VFR1200X Crosstourer ABS	Smooth and comfy all-roader	\$17,499+orc

Scooter		
Dio 110	New kid in town	\$2699+orc
PCX150.....	Stylish and practical	\$4299+orc
NSS300 Forza.....	Sporty and flexible.....	\$7099+orc

HYOSUNGwww.hyosung.com.au

Road		
GT250	Great beginner	\$2990+orc
GT650	Naked value and style	\$5190+orc
GT650R.....	Easy, sporty, affordable	\$5490+orc

Cruiser		
GV250 Aquila.....	Little cutie.....	\$3990+orc
GV650C Aquila Classic.....	LAMS value	\$6490+orc

INDIAN MOTORCYCLEwww.indianmotorcycle.com.au

Cruiser		
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Scout	Sportster meets V-Rod?	\$17,995ra
Chief Dark Horse.....	Lots of attitude.....	\$26,995ra
Chief	Leading the tribe back!.....	\$28,995ra
Chief Vintage	Signature heritage aesthetic	\$31,495ra
Chieftain	First Indian tourer/bagger	\$35,995ra
Roadmaster	Full-dress tourer	\$38,995ra

KAWASAKIwww.kawasaki.com.au

Road		
Z250SL	New LAMS model	\$5299+orc
Z250SLA.....	New LAMS with ABS.....	\$5599+orc
Z300 ABS	Ninja turned streetfighter	\$5999+orc
Ninja 300.....	One of the most popular LAMS bikes ever	\$5699+orc
Ninja 300 SE	Tastes like lime	\$6399+orc
Ninja 300 SE ABS.....	30th Anniversary edition.....	\$6399+orc
ER-6n/nL ABS	Quirky	\$9999+orc
Ninja 650/L ABS	Mid-sized gem	\$10,499+orc
Ninja ZX-6R (599).....	Striking	\$14,999+orc
Ninja ZX-6R ABS (636) SE	Bigger, grunter, prettier.....	\$16,649+orc
Z800 ABS	Sharper.....	\$12,999+orc
W800SE.....	Nostalgic, relaxed cruising	\$12,499+orc
Z1000 ABS SE.....	Special edition.....	\$16,799+orc
Ninja 1000 ABS	A sword with soul.....	\$15,999+orc
Ninja ZX-10R	Non-ABS 30th Anniv model	\$18,999+orc
Ninja ZX-10R ABS.....	30th Anniversary model.....	\$20,699+orc
Ninja H2	Supercharged superbike.....	\$33,000+orc
1400GTR ABS.....	Transcontinental.....	\$24,999+orc
Ninja ZX-14R ABS SE	Special edition.....	\$20,299+orc
Ninja ZX-14R ABS SE Öhlins.....	Öhlins, white, gold, scorching.....	\$21,799+orc

Cruiser		
Vulcan S	LAMS cruisin'	\$9999+orc
Vulcan 900 Classic SE	Classically glamorous	\$12,499+orc
Vulcan 900 Custom.....	Sleek-looking mid-weight.....	\$12,699+orc
Vulcan 1700 Classic ABS.....	Great blank canvas	\$19,999+orc
Vulcan 1700 Nomad ABS.....	Add a bit of bling.....	\$22,999+orc
Vulcan 1700 Vaquero ABS.....	Go to the dark side.....	\$24,499+orc
Vulcan 1700 Voyager ABS.....	Plush ride	\$25,999+orc

Adv Touring		
KLR650	Bargain with a capital B	\$8099+orc
Versys 650 ABS	Appealing all-rounder	\$9999+orc
Versys 650L ABS	LAMS model.....	\$9999+orc
Versys 1000	Bitumen burner	\$15,999+orc

KTMwww.ktm.com.au

Road		
390 Duke	Z300 beater?	\$7295+orc
390 RC	All new available soon	\$8295+orc
690 Duke R.....	The sportier motard.....	\$14,495+orc
1190 RC8 R	The orange flash	\$25,995+orc
1290 Super Duke R	Ballsy streetfighter.....	\$24,995+orc

Adv Touring		
690 Enduro R.....	Extreme riders only	\$14,695+orc
1050 Adventure	Adventure stripped bare.....	\$17,995+orc
1190 Adventure.....	High-tech adventurer.....	\$23,995+orc
1190 Adventure R	Add more adventure	\$24,995+orc
1290 Super Adventure	The ultimate Adventure	\$26,995+orc

KYMCOwww.kymco.com.au

Scooter		
Like 125	Fall in love	\$2995+orc
Super 8 125.....	Cool jigger.....	\$2895+orc
Espresso 150	I'll take a double shot	\$3199+orc
Like 200.....	Classic performer	\$3495+orc
People GT300i	For the people	\$6345+orc
Downtown 300i ABS	All-rounder with ABS.....	\$7495+orc

Road		
CK 125	No nonsense.....	\$2495+orc
Venox 250	Value and looks	\$6199+orc

LAROwww.laro.com.au**Road**

V Retro 250 DT250 clone \$2990+orc

Cruiser

Cruiser 250 Learner's ride \$3999+orc

MEGELLIwww.megelli.com**Road**

250S Nice looker \$4250+orc

250R Italian styling \$4850+orc

250SE Sportsbike handling \$5650+orc

MOTO GUZZIwww.motoguzzi.com.au

Moto Guzzi prices are maximum recommended advertised ride-away price.

Road

V7 Stone II Minimalist retro \$14,000ra

V7 Special II Faithful to the original V7 \$14,500ra

V7 Racer SE Limited edition marvel \$17,000ra

1200 Sport 4V SE Grunter \$19,400ra

Griso 1200 8V Grand slam \$21,500ra

Adv Touring

Stelvio 1200 8V NTX ABS Big brute \$23,500ra

Cruiser

California Audace Old school style \$TBA

California Eldorado Blast from the past \$TBA

California 1400 Custom Kalifornia attitude \$23,000ra

California Audace Dark and angry \$23,500ra

California Eldorado Blast from the past \$24,000ra

California 1400 Touring All a Cali should be \$26,000ra

California Touring SE Special Edition \$26,500ra

TWO NEW CALIFORNIAS

Moto Guzzi has expanded its California range to four models now that the new Audace and Eldorado are available. The 1400cc California is one of *ARR's* favourite cruisers, partly because it punches above its weight and also for its high-tech electronics including ride-by-wire, cruise control, traction control, variable engine maps, and ABS.

Guzzi paints the Audace as the "ostentatious, dark and angry" one, and they've given it a low seat, sporty riding position and a new exhaust that bumps torque slightly to 121Nm at just 3000rpm.

Guzzi's use of the Eldorado name goes way back to 1972, and the styling of the latest one reflects this heritage. It includes features such as bullhorn handlebars, a fat seat, wire wheels, whitewall tyres and, of course, white pinstripes.

The Eldorado (below right) sells for \$24,000ra and the Audace (below left) is priced at \$23,500ra.

**MV AGUSTA**www.mvagustaimports.com.au

All MV Agusta prices are ride-away.

Road

Brutale 675 EAS Bit of oomph at a good price \$15,799ra

F3 675 Sweet \$18,699ra

Brutale 800 EAS More power \$17,699ra

Brutale 800 RR More power, more handling \$19,999ra

F3 800 Track performance \$19,999ra

MORE MV TRIPLES

Two new MV Agusta models are now available, the Stradale 800 and the Turismo Veloce.

Some features of the all-new Stradale include a unique frame and swingarm, soft panniers, LED taillights, new front fairing and an adjustable screen. The model also has fully adjustable suspension at both ends. It has a retail price of \$19,999+orc and is available in three colour options: Pearl White over Sand Grey metallic, red over silver, and bronze metallic over Pearl White.

The Turismo Veloce 800 is a concept born from the MV Agusta/Mercedes AMG partnership. Designed as a touring motorcycle, the model's inline three-cylinder engine is made up of 80 per cent new components and produces 15 per cent more torque than the Rivale and Brutale. The Veloce comes standard with Bluetooth connectivity, an immobiliser, cruise control and an adjustable screen. Optional extras include huge 30L panniers that, when fitted, still remain slimmer than the width of the handlebars. Available now in dealerships for \$20,499ra.



Stradale 800	 An all-round MV	 \$19,999ra
Turismo Veloce 800	 All-roader, coming soon	 \$20,499ra
Turismo Veloce 800 Lusso	 Up-spec all-roader, coming soon	 \$TBA
Brutale 800 Dragster	 Nanananana Batman!	 \$20,499ra
Brutale 800 Dragster RR	 Batman meets Gucci	 \$22,999ra
F4 1000	 Beauty and the beast within	 \$24,499ra
F4 1000 RR	 Exotic weapon	 \$33,999ra
F4 RC	 The ultimate F4	 \$55,880ra
Brutale 1090	 More charm	 \$17,990ra
Brutale RR 1090	 Unleash the brute within	 \$22,999ra
Brutale 1090 Corsa	 Top jock	 \$27,999ra

PGOwww.motorsportimporters.com.au**Scooter**

Ligero 50 Good, little package \$1990+orc

Ligero 150 Good, small package \$3290+orc

X-Hot It's a hottie \$3990+orc

Gmax Go to the max \$4700+orc

PIAGGIOwww.piaggio.com.au**Scooter**

Typhoon 125 Blow you away \$2890+orc

Fly 150ie Buzz around the city \$3490+orc

Liberty 150ie Big wheel freedom \$3990+orc

Beverly 350 Higher performance \$7990+orc

Yourban 300 Leaning three-wheeler \$9490+orc

X10 500 Big features \$10,990+orc

ROYAL ENFIELDwww.royalenfieldaustralia.com**Road**

B5 Bullet 500 Fire your guns \$7490ra

C5 Classic 500 Individual style \$7790ra

GT Continental Cafe racer like they used to be \$8590ra

Despatch 500 Limited edition, already despatched \$8790ra

SUZUKIwww.suzukimotorcycles.com.au**Road**

Inazuma 250 Let your inner zoomer out \$4990+orc

PRICE GUIDE

TU250XL3	Retro learner	\$5990+orc
DR-Z400SM	Everyday motard	\$8990+orc
SFV650/LAMS	Commuting and fun duties.....	\$9990+orc
GSX650F/LAMS	Silky smooth.....	\$10,490+orc
GSX-R600	Angry bee.....	\$14,990+orc
GSR750	Naked cracker.....	\$10,790+orc
GSX-R750	The legend continues.....	\$15,990+orc
GSX-R1000	Even lighter and faster	\$18,490+orc
GSX-S1000	Naked superbike for 2015	\$TBA
GSX-S1000F	2015's new super-tourer	\$TBA
GSF1250S Bandit ABS	Long-distance ease.....	\$12,990+orc
GSX1250FA	A little bit of everything.....	\$14,990+orc
GSX1300R Hayabusa	Soar like an eagle.....	\$19,290+orc

Cruiser

VL250 Intruder.....	Bang that drum	\$6690+orc
LS650 Boulevard S40	Big single cylinder	\$7990+orc
VL800 C50T.....	All-new class.....	\$10,990+orc
VL1500 C90T.....	Bad boy	\$15,490+orc
VLR1800T C109RT.....	Now as a tourer.....	\$18,990+orc
VZR1800 M109R.....	Beaut and brutal.....	\$18,990+orc
VZR1800 M109R.....	Black edition	\$19,490+orc

Adv Touring

DL650 V-Strom	Deservedly a big seller	\$10,290+orc
DL650 V-Strom LAMS	Learner approved model	\$11,290+orc
DL650 V-Strom XT.....	Re-styled and updated for 2015	\$11,490+orc
DL650 V-Strom XT LAMS.....	Learner approved.....	\$10,990+orc
DL1000 V-Strom	Powerfully competent	\$15,490+orc

Scooter

UK110 Address	New city slicker	\$2490+orc
AN200A Burgman 200 ABS	The smallest city burger	\$5490+orc
AN650A Burgman ABS.....	A maxi to tour on	\$13,590+orc

SYM

www.scoota.com.au

Scooter

Classic 150	Noble ride	\$3199+orc
VS 150	Branch away	\$3549+orc
Symphony 150	Sporty big wheeler	\$3399+orc
HD Evo 200	Whacko!	\$5199+orc
CityCom 300i.....	Practical and competitive.....	\$6099+orc
Firenze 300	Full of features.....	\$6199+orc
MaxSym 400i	Ride-away price.....	\$8449+orc

TGB

www.tgbscooters.com.au

Scooter

Bellavita 125	Very chic	\$3990+orc
X-Race 150	You'll need knee sliders	\$2590+orc
Bullet 150	Small-calibre projectile	\$3390+orc
Xmotion 300.....	Smooth mover	\$4990+orc
Bellavita 300i.....	Very chic, and bigger	\$5490+orc

TORINO

www.torinomotorcycles.com.au

Torino ride-away prices are mostly Sydney-based and may vary elsewhere.

Cruiser

Veloce 250.....	American styled	\$4695ra
Titan 250	Chop chop.....	\$TBA

Scooter

Galetta Retro.....	Plenty of features	\$2195ra
Aero Sport	Cut the wind	\$2195ra
Famosa	City chic	\$2395ra
Messina Classic.....	New retro (Vespa) beauty	\$3495ra

TRIUMPH

www.triumphmotorcycles.com.au

Road

StreetTriple 660 LAMS.....	Learner-legal thrills	\$12,490+orc
StreetTriple 675 ABS	Streets ahead.....	\$12,990+orc
StreetTriple 675 R ABS.....	Even further ahead	\$13,990+orc
Daytona 675 ABS	Supersport gem	\$14,990+orc
Daytona 675R ABS.....	Track day heaven	\$16,990+orc
Bonneville.....	Tradition reborn	\$12,490+orc
Bonneville.....	Two tone.....	\$12,990+orc

■ Suzuki's new scooter, the Address 110, is available in dealerships for \$2490+orc



BonnevilleT100 Black.....	Livin' in the '70s	\$13,490+orc
BonnevilleT100 A2.....	Nostalgia rules	\$14,250+orc
BonnevilleT100 SE	Special edition.....	\$14,990+orc
Bonneville Newchurch SE	April 2015	\$12,990+orc
BonnevilleT214 Land Speed LE.....	Coming soon	\$14,490+orc
Bonneville Spirit SE.....	April 2015	\$13,990+orc
Scrambler	Dirt track racer	\$14,390+orc
Scrambler	Two tone.....	\$14,990+orc
ThruXton	To the café!	\$14,390+orc
ThruXton Ace SE	Ace Café special edition.....	\$14,990+orc
SpeedTriple ABS.....	It's a gem	\$16,990+orc
SpeedTriple R ABS	Sex on wheels	\$19,990+orc
StreetTriple RX SE	Inspired by the Daytona 675.....	\$14,990+orc
Sprint GT.....	All world capabilities.....	\$15,990+orc
Trophy SE.....	Superb tourer	\$27,990+orc

Cruiser

America	Easy urban rider	\$13,490ra
Speed Master.....	All round goodness	\$13,090+orc
Thunderbird ABS.....	Aptly named flyer	\$19,990+orc
Thunderbird ABSTT	Two-tone paint	\$19,990ra
Thunderbird Storm ABS	Thunderous	\$20,990+orc
Thunderbird ABS HAZE	Shine.....	\$21,990+orc
Thunderbird Nightstorm	The dark and stormy one.....	\$22,990+orc
Thunderbird Commander	The bigger, tougher T-bird.....	\$21,490+orc
Thunderbird Commander TT.....	Two-tone paint	\$21,990+orc
Thunderbird LT.....	T-bird goes touring.....	\$23,490+orc
Thunderbird LTTT.....	Two-tone paint	\$23,990+orc
Rocket III Roadster ABS.....	What's not to love about 2300cc?	\$22,490+orc
Rocket X	Bad to the bone.....	\$23,490+orc
Rocket III Touring ABS.....	Reasonably easy to ride.....	\$24,490+orc

Adv Touring

Tiger 800 XR.....	Great all-rounder.....	\$15,090+orc
Tiger 800 XRx.....	Hi-tech all-rounder	16,590+orc
Tiger 800 XRT.....	Equipped for touring	\$17,890+orc

■ The Nighthorn, the newest variation to Triumph's Thunderbird range, is now available in dealerships. The blacked-out cruiser, based strongly on the Thunderbird Storm, can be picked up for \$22,990+orc



Tiger 800 XC.....	The more hardcore Tiger.....	\$16,590+orc
Tiger 800 XCx.....	Hi-tech and hardcore.....	\$17,690+orc
Tiger 800 XCA.....	Equipped for adventure.....	\$19,390+orc
Tiger 1050 Sport ABS.....	More growl for the road.....	\$15,990+orc
Tiger Explorer 1200.....	True adventure-tourer.....	\$20,490+orc
Tiger Explorer Wire Wheels.....	The tougher version.....	\$20,990+orc

URAL www.imz-ural.com.au

Road

T.....	Cult status outfit.....	\$20,340+orc
cT.....	Lower stance, better handling.....	\$20,340+orc
Retro.....	The classic of classics.....	\$23,410+orc
Tourist.....	Sidecar touring in classic elegance.....	\$22,500+orc

Adv Touring

Ranger.....	The tougher option.....	\$23,420+orc
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VESPA www.vespa.com.au

Scooter

Primavera LX125 3-Valve.....	For the designer in you.....	\$5590+orc
Primavera LX150 3-Valve.....	With a bit more oomph.....	\$6290+orc
PX150.....	The purist's ride.....	\$6490+orc
Sprint 150ie 3V.....	Sporty looks.....	\$6590+orc
GTS150ie 3V.....	Practical.....	\$6590+orc
GTS250ie FL.....	Style in a great package.....	\$7890+orc
GTS300 Super FL ABS.....	Vroom vroom.....	\$9190+orc
GTS300 Super Sport FL.....	Sportier style.....	\$9490+orc
946 Bellissima.....	Limited stock.....	\$12,990+orc

VICTORY www.victorymotorcycles.com.au

All Victory prices are ride-away.

Cruiser

Vegas 8 Ball.....	Sink the 8-ball.....	\$19,995ra
High-Ball.....	Ol' skool cool.....	\$20,995ra
Hammer 8 Ball.....	Hammer that 8-ball.....	\$21,995ra
Judge.....	A younger Victory.....	\$21,995ra
Gunner.....	Very cool bobber.....	\$20,995ra
Hammer S.....	Hammer it!.....	\$23,995ra
Jackpot.....	Showroom custom.....	\$24,995ra
Boardwalk Black.....	Cool classic in black.....	\$23,495ra
Boardwalk Pearl White.....	Cool classic in white.....	\$23,995ra
Cross Country.....	Comfortable touring.....	\$27,495ra
Cross Country Tour.....	Ultra-comfortable touring.....	\$29,995ra
Magnum.....	Cross country bling.....	\$29,995ra
Vision Tour.....	Space age looks.....	\$31,995ra

VIPER www.urbanmotoimports.com.au

Cruiser

Black Diamond.....	2500cc of raw grunt.....	\$54,990+orc
Diamondback.....	Cruising superpower.....	\$54,990+orc

YAMAHA www.yamaha-motor.com.au

Road

YZF-R15 V2.0.....	New version 2.0.....	\$4299+orc
YZF-R3.....	Race-replica for learners.....	\$6099+orc
SR400.....	The classic single is back!.....	\$8999+orc
XJ6NL.....	New 2014 model.....	\$9799ra
XJ6NL SP.....	White edition.....	\$9999ra
FZ6R.....	Full fairing, LAMS model.....	\$9999ra
FZ6R SP.....	Special edition.....	\$10,499+orc
YZF-R6.....	WSS champ.....	\$15,999+orc
MT-03.....	Torquey LAMS single.....	\$9999+orc
MT-07LA.....	Learner legal thriller.....	\$9599+orc
MT-07HO.....	Full-size, full-power twin.....	\$9999+orc
FZ8N.....	Hot all-rounder.....	\$12,990+orc
FZ8S.....	Enjoy the road and corners.....	\$13,990+orc
MT-09.....	Three-cylinder thriller.....	\$11,299+orc
MT-09 ABS.....	ABS option.....	\$11,799+orc
MT-09 Tracer.....	Loony tours!.....	\$14,999+orc
TDM900.....	Mixed-up marvel.....	\$13,599+orc
FZ1N.....	Ready for anything.....	\$15,699+orc

FZ1S.....	With protection.....	\$16,499+orc
YZF-R1.....	Rossi's roadbike?.....	\$23,499+orc
YZF-R1M.....	No, this one's Rossi's roadbike!.....	\$29,999+orc
XJR1300.....	Refined cool.....	\$13,999+orc
FJR1300A Touring Edition.....	Police-spec tourer.....	\$23,999+orc
FJR1300A.....	Sophisticated, sporty tourer.....	\$24,999+orc
FJR1300E.....	Electronic suspension.....	\$26,999+orc

Cruiser

XV250 Virago.....	Great small package.....	\$6499+orc
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FULL-POWER MT-07 IS HERE

The full-power Yamaha MT-07 is now available in Australia, boasting 55kW from the larger 689cc engine. The popular learner-legal 655cc MT-07LA (for Learner Approved) will remain on sale alongside the new MT-07HO (for High Output), and now all LAMS-approved ones will come with ABS brakes. The two models are identical except for the engine capacity, output, the lack of ABS on the HO model and a small weight difference because of the ABS. The LAMS MT-07 has a price tag of \$9599 (plus on-road costs) while the HO is only slightly dearer at \$9999 (+orc). Small, light and with strong engine torque, the LAMS MT-07 is a delight to ride; it's nimble and very responsive in true learner-friendly style. That same kind of handling will make the full-power version an exciting ride for more experienced riders, all without spending big money. The MT-07HO comes in a white colour scheme with Race Blu highlights. The LAMS model is being sold in Competition White, Matt Grey, Deep Armour and new Extreme Yellow.



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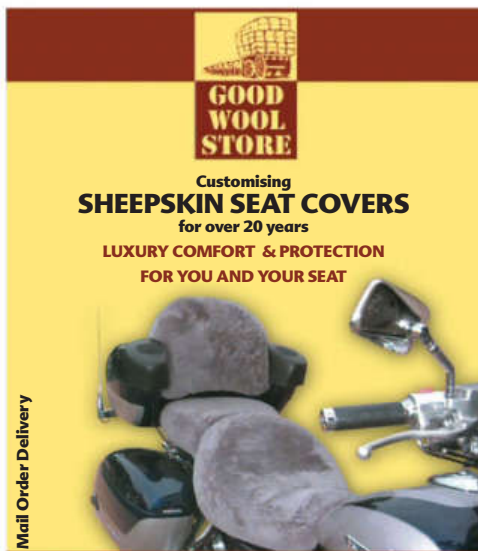
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PLACES TO STAY ON PAGE 95

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Think time and motorcycling, and you might find yourself wearing this awesome watch



You could win one of two TW Steel watches worth \$499 each by simply sharing a photo or telling a yarn! The watches are part of the TW Steel's Yamaha Factory Racing series — the TW926 model features an impressive 45mm face.

The TW926 has Chronograph Big Caliber Miyota 6S20 movement, a brushed-steel case with PVD yellow-gold-plated pushers, black carbon-fibre dial with white indexes, hardened mineral crystal, blue silicon strap with raised white Yamaha Factory Racing logo double-injected, and it's water resistant to five atmospheres. Good stuff, in other words.

There are two ways of entering our competition, and you can try one or both. The theme for both is "time and motorcycling".

1. Write a story of about 800 words that encapsulates the concept of "time and motorcycling". Be as straight, creative, abstract or absurd as you like. Your entry will be judged on its story-telling merit, so simply aim to entertain in whatever style you choose. Our only stipulation is that you keep it within cooee of 800 words or it will not be accepted.
2. Submit a photograph that implies "time and motorcycling". Again, it can be straight, creative, abstract or absurd, as long it gets the point across. Feel free to tell us a little about it.

The photo must be digital and it has to be high-resolution, which in this case means at least 2000 pixels along its smallest edge, and bigger is better. It can be portrait or landscape.

Send entries to editor@roadrider.com.au with the subject line "TW Steel competition". Entries must be received by 5pm on Friday, November 20, 2015. We'll announce the winners, and publish their entries, on roadrider.com.au and in issue 123.

WHAT KIND OF STORY?

Some of you know this story. It's not even close to 800 words in this telling, but if I were entering a story into this competition it'd be the long version of this:

On a solo crossing of Australia from Steep Point, WA, to Byron Bay, NSW, it rained in the outback. I'd just made it to Bedourie in south-west Queensland when the heavens opened, the roads closed and my entire world became this little town for five days. I rang the boss to say I'd be late back from holidays.

When the skies cleared and roads dried, it was

time to re-start my life on the road, only now I was on a mission to make it finish as quickly as possible. I'd have to make Byron in two days, then Sydney in one. First stop: Charleville, almost 900km away on poor roads that were still slushy, all in a short winter's day. I knew I'd be struggling to arrive in daylight.

As the sun set, the roos came out. With 120km to go to Charleville, I was doing alright at 120km/h. I'd be there in an hour. More roos, a close call. I slowed. With 100km to go before Charleville, it was dark, the roos were bad and I'd slowed to 100km/h. I'd be there in an hour.

I was down to 80km/h when I passed the 80km sign to Charleville. I'd be there in an hour. I clipped a roo, and was barely game enough to do 60 when the sign said I had 60km to go. I'd be there in an hour ...

No, at this rate I'd always be an hour from Charleville. Time went on, motion went on, but somehow the relationship between time and motion had become impossibly corrupted. I pulled off the road, unrolled the swag and went to sleep. Maybe tomorrow when I woke up I'd be only half an hour from Charleville.

— MICK MATHESON



WHAT KIND OF PHOTO?

A cleverly composed racing photo could imply time, as could a technically correct motion blur. An ancient bike abandoned in a dusty shed tells of decades that have passed. This one's the shot I'd submit, because to me it reveals time of day, time taken to cover distance, and a timeless land where dust hangs in the air forever.

LOOKING BACK

FALL OF EUROPE

Harley-Davidson's ownership by AMF Inc. was a mixed bag. AMF, known before 1970 as American Machine and Foundry, started life making production machinery. From 1900 onwards it made things like cigarette, baking and stitching machines.

Post WWII, the company went into automating bowling centres. Its association with ten-pin bowling has continued ever since. It was also a big producer of product for the US military

and made everything from sports equipment to nuclear reactors. Talk about diversified!

AMF purchased Harley-Davidson in 1968 to further its active sports profile that would include yachts, scuba gear, golf clubs and bicycles. AMF's ownership saw some obscure machines carrying H-D badging, like snowmobiles and boats. The competition side continued on the right path and legendary machines such as the XR750 road racer and XR-750 dirt tracker were built under AMF ownership.



By the '80s the Japanese had almost seen off America's last motorcycle manufacturer. The Europeans were struggling and the British had perished. All was not looking well.

A buy-back team took control of the ailing company in 1981 and it was time for a refocus. The model line-ups grew through the '80s and '90s as H-D went on to become one of the strongest motorcycle brands in the world today.

LOOKING FORWARD

ISSUE 119 GOES ON SALE NOVEMBER 19

PARAÍSO DE LA MOTOCICLETA

A motorcycle, a GPS and the Spanish coast in spring. It doesn't get much better than this!

RIDIN', RIDIN', RIDIN'

- Built for exploring, could Aprilia's Caponord Rally be another great twin-cylinder adventure bike? If the Caponord Touring in our previous issue is anything to go by, it sure will be!
- A punchy parallel-twin in a multipurpose chassis is the perfect recipe for a fun roadbike. That's the Kawasaki Versys 650L, and it's learner legal too!
- Light, powerful and razor sharp, the MV Agusta Brutale 800 has the performance to be a worthy alternative to big-bore nakedbikes.
- The long-term BMW R1200RT clocks up thousands more kilometres and we roll a new Moto Guzzi V7 II into the shed. Which one? You'll have to wait and see!

RIDERS ON THE STROMS

We join the Stromtroopers for a gathering of, what else but V-Stroms!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Harley-Davidson's venerable Electra Glide turned 50 this year and there was more than just a cake and candle to celebrate.

TWO-UP

Not that game we rarely get to play on April 25, but



having someone on the back. We'll give you some great tips, tricks and advice for touring two-up.

NOT FORGETTING

All the other beaut stuff and regulars you expect to see in each and every issue of *ARR*. See you next month!

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